# ENGLAND

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# PREFACE TO THE CHEAPER EDITION

In the Preface to the First Edition I confessed that I had found the preparation of this book extremely difficult, and that I was not satisfied with the result. To write a book of 300 pages about one's own country is obviously to embark on an adventure where angels might fear to tread. I do not quarrel with the reviewer who described *England* as "a rather creditable failure in an impossible task."

However, the public has been interested, and the serious reviewers have treated me as kindly as I deserved. If journalists of the baser sort resuscitated the parrot cry of pessimism, that was to be expected of them, and it is useless to show irritation. It has been generally recognized that the book is an honest attempt at national stocktaking, and that I have throughout given reasons for my judgments, whether critics agree with them or not.

I said in my first Preface that I should probably be convicted of some slips. A few have been brought home to me, but I think only a few. It was a stupid mistake to suppose that Kenya was once a German colony. I am told that I should not have followed Jevons in predicting the exhaustion of our coal supply. The troubles of that industry are only to a small extent due to the failure of the mines themselves. A more unfortunate lapse was the sentence in which I attributed intemperance to some Socialist members of the House of Commons. The time is long past when two Cabinet Ministers, who had dined not wisely but too well, were walking unsteadily to their seats. "I don't see the Speaker," said one of them. "Don't you?" said his friend; "I see *two*." A

plea which a hundred years ago would have been accepted as the only possible excuse for outrageous breaches of decorum, is now resented as an insult. It is notorious that some Labour Leaders are heavy drinkers, and that some Socialist Members "turn the House of Commons into a bear garden." But I had no right to identify the two, and if the type of the book is ever set up again, I shall take care that the peccant words are expunged.

Three indignant Scotsmen have written to accuse me of insulting their country by calling this book *England*. Surely Charles Lamb was not wrong in thinking that the sense of humour in this highly-gifted nation is imperfectly developed. My publisher would not have allowed me to call the volume "South Britain" or "Lower Scotland"; and even my down-trodden nationality may reasonably be allowed the universal privilege of a name.

Though the book as a whole cannot fairly be called pessimistic, I directed attention to some unpalatable truths, which sensible Englishmen ought to be willing to face. One of these is that the position of Great Britain as one of the Great Powers is bound to decline, relatively though not absolutely. The future, as regards effective force and wealth, belongs to the large countries which are not yet full of people, and the natural resources of which have not yet been completely tapped. The chief of these are Russia, the United States, the Argentine Republic, Brazil, and our own Dominions of Canada and Australasia. The prospect is favourable for the English language, and not unfavourable for the British race, but it is not favourable for the Mother-country apart from its daughter States, which may or may not be always willing to support us as heartily as they did in 1914. This relative decline in power is a thing for which we must be prepared. The history of Holland and

Spain is a warning that small countries have their day of glory, and then take the position which their limited area imposes upon them.

A well-known politician, who I think ought to have known better, rated me uncivilly for making bad blood between England and America. I like the Americans, and am a warm advocate of Anglo-American friendship; but those who say—and we hear it said constantly—that a war between the two countries is "unthinkable," are shutting their eyes to the facts. I wrote with restraint on the subject; I might have said much more. For example, in the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt with Senator Lodge (Vol. I, pp. 200–205), the following words occur—and let it be remembered that Roosevelt was more friendly to this country than most American politicians. "Let the fight come if it must. I don't care whether our sea-coasts are bombarded or not. *We would take Canada. Personally I rather hope the fight will come soon; the clamour for peace has convinced me that the country wants war.*" It is needless to say that at the time when this letter was written we had not given the Americans the slightest provocation. To put it bluntly, the man who says that Republics are less bellicose than Emperors is either a fool or a hypocrite. As Lord Salisbury once wrote, moderation, especially in annexing territory, has never been a characteristic of democracies.

We seem to be in a state of transition from a civilization based on cheap labour to a civilization based on the complete mechanization of industry. Aristotle said that "if the shuttles and spindles could move themselves, we should have no more need of slaves." This imagined transformation has almost come to pass. Whether the result will be, as some suppose, to shorten the day's work to six hours or less, or whether there will in the future be

no room for the unskilled labourer, is not certain. Nor need I speculate here whether the absolute standardization of wants and the means of supplying them will not cause a general levelling down of taste and culture to a mean and insipid vulgarity. But the change will certainly bring to an end the phase of industrialism under which England became the workshop of the world, and the most overcrowded country in Europe. Each important country will, in my opinion, tend to become more and more self-sufficing. Intelligent Governments will work with this object, partly in order to minimize the risk of ruin and starvation in the event of war. The use of electricity from water-power will increase rapidly, and will lead to the industrialization and economic independence of countries like Italy, which have no important coalfields. It seems to me almost certain that we shall be unable to find food or work for our present population. For this reason, I strongly favour assisted and directed emigration as a palliative, and a further reduction of the birth-rate as a cure. I cannot think that emigration alone will suffice, unless we smooth the path of the emigrant by employing cheap foreign labour to clear the land for him, and to this our Dominions will never consent. In any case, the next fifty years will be a very critical time for England.

I do not think that there is any deterioration in the national character, though the dysgenic selection now in progress is a very serious matter. The nation is becoming civilized all through, and thus much natural talent, which formerly remained hidden and unused from lack of opportunity, is now becoming available for social service. But we suffer from a wretched form of government, under which every year a larger fraction of the fruits of honest industry is confiscated by politicians to bribe

the electors. The democratic franchise is plainly a disaster; and no alternative is yet in sight. Dictatorships are only temporary expedients, leading to fierce reactions.

Mr. Max Beerbohm has depicted the modern man contemplating, with a puzzled expression, a gigantic note of interrogation. I must admit that this is my attitude. I have tried to state the problems, and have made such comments upon them as seemed to me worth making. But we elderly people must leave the solutions to the younger generation, who do not seem to be unduly weighed down by their responsibilities.

W. R. Inge.

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This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise ;
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war ;
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands ;
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
Feared by their breed and famous by their birth,
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,
For Christian service and true chivalry,
As in the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son ;
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world.

*Shakespeare.*

Friend, call me what you will ; no jot care I ;
I that shall stand for England till I die.

*William Watson.*

# CHAPTER I

## THE LAND AND ITS INHABITANTS

THE large island off the north-west coast of Europe, which we call Great Britain, but which continental nations often call England, now contains nearly 89,000 square miles, of which a minute fraction is shorn off every year by the encroaching sea. There are only four larger islands in the world, if we exclude the two island continents of Antarctica, which is about one-and-a-half times larger than Europe, and Australia, which approaches the area of the United States, and also ice-covered Greenland, which is nearly ten times the size of Great Britain. The four larger islands are New Guinea, with 330,000 square miles, Borneo, with 280,000, Madagascar with 228,000, and Sumatra with 160,000. Great Britain is exceeded in area by no less than nine States of the American Union. The area of England and Wales, that part of the island to which this book will be almost exclusively restricted, is given as 58,340 square miles. It is a perilously small base for a nation which has aspired successfully to be a world-power.

Great Britain was not always an island. In the early Pleistocene, the period of the greatest continental elevation, the west coast of Europe ran some way to the west of Ireland, and at one time even included Iceland within its unbroken land frontier. There was then no North Sea ; the Thames flowed into the Rhine, and this great river reached the Arctic gulf near the latitude of the Faroe Islands. This was the time when the great mammals could cross the land-bridge at Gibraltar or roam from the steppes of Asia, to stalk over the plains of Britain.

But this period, and the subsequent changes which severed England from the Continent by strips of shallow salt-water and cut off Ireland from the main

island, are no part of the story of the English people. Let us look at the familiar map of Europe as it is to-day.

We are now in the Atlantic period of history, which followed the Mediterranean period of Classical antiquity and the Middle Ages. Before the discovery of the New Hemisphere, our island seemed to be at "the utmost corner of the world," as Shakespeare says. Virgil went further, and spoke of the Britons as "completely sundered from the whole world." Indeed, Europe itself, after the fall of the West Roman Empire, had long been in a state of blockade. To the North and North-West was the ice, which spares Scandinavia, but lies in a broad belt round the coast of Greenland, and so retarded the discovery of the North American Continent, which appears on the map to be easily accessible from this side. Westward lay the uncharted waste of waters; south of the Mediterranean stretched the great desert; the East had been overrun by the foes of God and man. Since the age of discovery, the position of Britain has been very different. Until lately it was, by geographical position, the most favoured of all nations, intrenched by nature against European invasion, and looking out over the main highway of commerce from numerous good harbours. This geographical primacy is no longer ours; for the Pacific trade will in a short time be almost as important as the Atlantic, and North America, with harbours on both oceans, and a vast territory, rich in every natural product, between them, has a decisive advantage which must, for an indefinite period, make the United States the centre of the world's wealth and commerce. But our position in the north-west of Europe—which we share with France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany—is, though no longer the best in the world, more advantageous than that of the Mediterranean countries. Not only

are we nearer to the Atlantic, and to important sources of raw material and good markets, but the productive plains of western Europe are near the coast, and traversed by navigable rivers. It is true that the plains of England lie to the east, the west being hilly or mountainous. But the chains of hills are broken by estuaries like those of the Clyde and Mersey, and our eastern ports are still near the Atlantic. We are in some ways less favoured than the French, whose large rivers are all easily connected by canals, and who have the great advantage of harbours both on the Atlantic and on the Mediterranean. But our coal has hitherto given us an advantage over our neighbours.

The contrast between the eastern and the western coastline of Britain must strike everyone who looks at a map. The difference is almost as great as between the shattered Pacific coast of southern Chile and the monotonous sea-board of the Argentine Republic on the Atlantic side. The comparatively great length of the island from north to south has also retarded its political union, and has fostered a not unwholesome provincialism. The northern part of the island still remains a distinct though not separate nation, and rejects the name of England.

The climate of England has been roundly abused since classical antiquity. "The atmosphere," says Strabo, "is rainy rather than snowy, and when it is fine, fog prevails a great part of the time, so that the sun is often visible for three or four hours only, about the middle of the day." "The climate," says Tacitus, "is disgusting, from the frequency of rain and fog; but the cold is never severe." "It is always foggy," says Herodian. "Britain is deficient in sunshine," says Minucius Felix, "but it is warmed by the temperature of the sea which surrounds it." On the other side Charles II, "who never said a foolish thing," observed that there is

hardly any other country where a man can work comfortably in the open air the whole year round. The temperature in winter is far higher than those of most other lands in the same latitude. It is difficult to realize that we are no further from the Pole than Labrador, with its Arctic climate. It has been usual to attribute this abnormal warmth to the Gulf Stream, which crosses the Atlantic from the Gulf of Mexico, making the water several degrees warmer than the air. On the east coast of North America the climate is affected in the opposite direction by the cold currents from Greenland, and northern Chile is kept cool and deprived of rainfall by a cold stream from the Antarctic. But we are now told that our typical "Oceanic" climate, with its mild winters and cool summers and rainfall nearly evenly distributed throughout the year, is chiefly due to the prevailing westerly winds, which reach our shores charged with moisture. The air rises as it meets the hills near our western coasts, and as it rises it expands and cools, and condensation takes place. A heavy rainfall is the result, especially where the western slope is steep. In Skye and Mull the annual fall often exceeds a hundred inches, and among the Carnarvonshire hills it is not much less. At Ambleside about eighty inches of rain fall during the year, and there are still wetter spots in the same district. But the notion that England as a whole is a wet country is erroneous. The moist westerly winds have shed much of their vapour before they reach our eastern counties, so that the country becomes progressively drier as we travel eastwards. In Cornwall the rainfall is about forty-five inches, in Devonshire about forty, in East Anglia under twenty-five. But Leicestershire and Bedfordshire are also named as dry counties.

A high rainfall and a deficiency of sunshine do not always go together. The southern slopes of the hills

receive more sun than the northern. The most sunny parts of the island are close to the English Channel, especially in Cornwall and South Devon; the most cloudy are in North Wales and the highlands of Derbyshire and Yorkshire.

The average temperature of the air does not follow the latitude; the January isotherms run nearly north and south. Though no part of the island has an extreme climate by continental standards, the eastern counties between the Humber and the Thames estuary have relatively warm summers and cold winters, and those parts of the south-west which are protected from cold winds have a very mild and equable climate throughout the year. The notorious east winds are most trying near the east coast, and perhaps especially on the bleak moors of Northumberland and Yorkshire.

The drainage areas are very numerous for the size of the country. The largest are those of the Thames, which, including its broad estuary, drains about 10,000 square miles, the Humber with 9,550, the Severn with 8,580, and the Wash with 5,850. The Stour was once a large river, when it flowed through the Solent and received the waters of the Avon, the Test, and the Itchen.

Few countries can vie with England for quiet beauty in the late spring and early summer, when the trees are in their fresh greenness, and the ground is carpeted with buttercups, primroses, violets, and bluebells. The mountains have no grandeur, except in a few places in Scotland, notably in the Isle of Skye; but the hazy atmosphere seems to magnify the size of distant hills, and often produces soft colour effects which have a beauty of their own. The contour of the land forbids any large waterfalls, a defect which may be a serious disadvantage to our manufactures in the future; but the glens of Scotland, Wales, and parts of England are justly famous.

The autumn tints of English trees are subdued in colour when compared with the brilliant reds of an American "fall"; but next to the early summer, October is often the pleasantest month of the year. The winter deserves its bad reputation. Almost everywhere disagreeable, its unpleasantness culminates in the Lancashire towns and Glasgow; in a few sheltered spots in the south there is practically no winter, and sub-tropical plants will grow out-of-doors.

The soil and climate of England are better adapted to pasture than to corn-growing. Wheat requires more sunshine and heat than our capricious climate can always bestow. This cereal thrives best where the cultivator can depend on a moderate rainfall during the earlier stages of growth, and on several weeks of warm sunshine later. In England and Wales it is grown on the lee sides of the coastal ranges, and especially in the lowlands of the east, but the crop is often injured by want of sunshine or by excessive rain. It is on the whole true that at present wheat is not grown on a large scale in the climates best suited to it, since other important factors come into play, such as soil and relief, and abundance of cheap virgin land. In Canada, Australia, and the Argentine the yield per acre is by no means large—it may be roughly estimated at twenty-one bushels in Canada, twelve in Australia, and ten in the Argentine, contrasted with about thirty in England and about forty in Denmark and Belgium. In these new countries wheat is cultivated with little labour, and it has been the custom to crop the soil till it begins to be exhausted. The best climate for wheat would seem to be that of the Mediterranean basin, where the grain is sown in autumn to get the advantage of the wet winter, and ripens quickly under the hot summer sun, when it is safely gathered in during the dry season. In lands where the winters

are very cold, it is of course sown in the spring, and reaped in the long fine autumn. In these climates melting snow may take the place of spring rains. The conditions are different in the old countries, where wheat is grown only as one of a rotation, and where the soil is enriched by heavy manuring. This treatment requires far more labour than is ever applied in the new countries ; this is the explanation of the high yield per acre in England, Denmark and Belgium. In the north of Britain the great length of the summer day enables wheat to be grown, rather precariously, in some districts where the other conditions are unfavourable. Of the other cereals, only barley and oats are important ; our climate is unsuited for maize, and more obviously so for rice.

We are accustomed to think of Great Britain as the land of luxuriant grass fields. But two thousand years ago the whole country was covered with forest trees. The most beautiful of our trees, the beech, is said to have been introduced by the Romans, but most of the other trees which form the scanty remains of our woodland were indigenous. The chief cause of the destruction of our forests was probably the need of wood for smelting iron. Our iron industry was on the point of ruin for want of timber when coal-smelting was discovered. But the place of the woods was taken by very rich grass, which made England the Australia of the Middle Ages, wool being the staple export from our country. The woolsack on which the Lord Chancellor sits is a reminder of what used to be the chief trade of England. Perhaps the best wooded parts of England at the present day are Sussex, Kent and Hampshire. Orchards and hops belong especially either to Kent, or to Hereford, Gloucester and Somerset.

Our cattle are not really nourished only by the rich grass of the English plains. Before the importation of cattle food from America and elsewhere,

they nearly starved every winter. Cattle-rearing in England now depends on various nutritive foods which come from the new countries, and the same is true of Continental Europe. We must also remember how large a proportion of our own food is imported. Since it has become possible to send quantities of fresh meat across the ocean, the poorer classes of our people have become much more carnivorous than they used to be. This addiction to flesh food will probably be only temporary, for in the new countries it pays better, on the whole, to grow corn than to raise stock, and the conflict between the herdsman and the cultivator is in process of being decided in favour of the latter. It is therefore safe to predict that if the population of the world continues to increase, its inhabitants will be driven to a mainly vegetarian diet.

The North Sea shares with the Newfoundland Banks the credit of being the richest fishing-ground in the world, though I believe there are signs that the number of fish is diminishing. Fish are a great self-replenishing reservoir of human food. In the words of an old fishing song :

> The husbandman has rent to pay
> (Blow, winds, blow,)
> And seed to purchase every day
> (Row, boys, row,)
> But he who farms the rolling deeps
> Though never sowing always reaps ;
> The ocean's fields are fair and free,
> There are no rent days on the sea.

This brief sketch of the natural resources of the island, which of course could be easily expanded, and perhaps corrected, from the numerous treatises on farming and economic geography, is enough to show that England is a favoured land, well suited to be the home of a vigorous and industrious people. In point of health, it shares the very low death-rates

which distinguish all the countries of north-western Europe. Less healthy than Scandinavia and Denmark, it ranks with Holland as a very salubrious country, surpassed only by Australia and New Zealand in the lands outside Europe. How far this favourable position is due to superior sanitation and medical practice it is not easy to say. The medieval walled town was a hotbed of pestilence in England as on the Continent; the present low rate of mortality has been achieved only within living memory. In a highly urbanized community so low a death-rate is certainly remarkable; the conditions for longevity are obviously more favourable in countries like Norway and Sweden.

The effect of the mining industry upon the wealth and population of the country belongs rather to a later chapter, when the industrial revolution and its consequences will be discussed. Under the Roman occupation and before it, the most important mineral was tin, which was found in abundance at the south-west corner of the island, and after being shipped across the Channel was conveyed through France into Italy. But the importance of tin declined when iron came to be substituted for bronze, and the tin-mines are now nearly exhausted. The Romans worked iron in the Forest of Dean; their smelting, however, was so unskilful that their slag-heaps were re-smelted profitably for a long period in modern times.

The approaching exhaustion of our coal-fields has long exercised the minds of anxious publicists. Estimates differ as to the time for which our supplies may be expected to hold out; but it is already plain that, apart from the disaffection among the miners, the most profitable seams have been, to a great extent, exploited. There are also signs that in the future coal will be partly displaced, for many purposes, by oil, and by electricity derived from

water-power. The appearance of factories in the Alps and on the shores of the Norwegian fiords may be of ominous import to countries which now depend on their coal. For oil we have to look to other parts of our empire, or to foreign countries. Our water-power, except in the mountainous districts, is very small. Science may come to the rescue, either by discovering a way of using power generated at a great distance—for example, in Iceland, where the amount of water-power is almost unlimited, or by harnessing the tides. But I gather that both these devices, though theoretically possible, have to surmount immense practical difficulties, so that we cannot count on their being made available.

This has been a very cursory sketch of the position, natural features, and resources of the land in which we live. We have enjoyed temporary advantages which have made us, for a comparatively brief period in our history, a world-power, and we have made the most of these advantages in planting our flag, our people, and our language in many other parts of the world. This story of British expansion, in which we take a just pride, will be the subject of a later chapter. The prospects of our country in the future must be discussed towards the end of this book. It will be observed that as compared with other nations which have won and lost great empires, we have a larger home-base than Holland, but smaller than France, Germany, or Spain. As compared with the United States, Russia, and China, we are a very small country indeed.

We must now turn to the people who inhabit our island, their racial characteristics and the various stocks which have blended to make the modern Englishman. The subject is very difficult, for early anthropology is a new science, in which discoveries are being made every year. Theories are made and rebutted, one after another, and there is much

uncertainty. The problems are complicated by politics and prejudice. At one time our countrymen were proud of their Teutonic ancestry, and desirous to prove themselves pure Nordics. Then came the Great War, when everything made in Germany fell for a time into discredit, and it began to be argued that the conquering Anglo-Saxons probably mingled with the earlier population instead of exterminating them. Others have thrown doubt on the whole theory of race as an indication of superiority or inferiority. They point out justly that a pure-blooded stock can hardly be found, and that the Nordic theory has been made an excuse for patriotic arrogance and unbridled aggression. In the brief sketch which follows I have attempted to summarize the theories which seem at present to hold the field; but I do so without confidence that they will not have to be modified as the result of further investigation.

We need not go back beyond the neolithic race, dark-haired and long-headed, who were in possession when the long barrows were made. Whether this race was in part descended from the palaeolithic people who inhabited the island before the last ice-age, seems to be uncertain, but it is most probable that the neolithic Britons came from the south as the climate became more genial. It is now considered certain that there was an "Aegean" culture, in contact with Egypt and Babylonia, as early as four thousand years before Christ. That civilization, which had a long life, gradually spread westwards. Authorities are not agreed whether this "Mediterranean" race came originally from the East or from North Africa, but the undoubted trace of large rivers crossing the Sahara make the theory plausible that the gradual desiccation of that vast area drove the inhabitants northwards to the coasts of the Mediterranean. It would be natural for the emigrants from

a warmer climate to prefer the lands adjoining the western coasts of Europe, in which they would not be exposed to the winters of the European continent, where severe cold prevails even in latitudes far south of Great Britain. It is certain that these " Aegeans " or " Mediterraneans " traded even with Scandinavia for amber, and with northern France and Great Britain for tin, which, as has been already stated, was an essential article of commerce during the bronze age. This race pushed north into our island, and at least partially colonized it to its northern extremity, penetrating even to the Shetland Isles. They are the ancestors of the races absurdly called Celtic—the Welsh, Irish, Cornish, and some of the Highland Scots.

The Celts, called in antiquity Keltoi, Celtae, Galli, Galatae, are spoken of as resembling in physical features the Teutonic Nordics, being tall and fair-complexioned. They were long-headed, in this resembling both the Nordics and the Mediterraneans. There are however some historians who distinguish the Celts and the Gauls, and give the name of Celts to the round-headed " Alpine " race which invaded Britain before the coming of the Britons. This difference of nomenclature illustrates the state of uncertainty, almost of confusion, in which the whole question is still involved. It is perhaps safer to follow Pausanias, who says distinctly that the same people who were originally called Celts were afterwards called Gauls. In fact, considering the vast amount of false ethnology and absurd politics which have gathered round the name of Celt, it is a pity that we cannot avoid it altogether, and speak of the Nordic, Alpine, and Mediterranean races as the constituents of the population of Europe. This much, at any rate, seems to be firmly established.

The round-headed Alpine race, which drove a broad wedge between the homes of the Nordics and

of the Mediterraneans, and which perhaps preponderates in the present populations of France and Germany, as well as in all the Slav countries, presents a very difficult problem in England. It is certain that they invaded and settled in Britain ; they were the makers of the round barrows which have been found in various parts of the country. But at present the whole population of this island is more or less dolichocephalic. The roundheads seem to have left no linguistic or anthropometric traces, unless, as some suppose, they have slightly raised the cephalic index of the " Britons," and of some among the descendants of the Britons. The roundheads who invaded Britain seem to have been a very tall race, averaging about five feet nine inches, which is much above the stature of any existing " Alpine " stock. Some of their skulls are rather ape-like, with prominent brow-ridges and protruding jaws. But there is another type of skull among them, which has been pronounced purely Alpine. It is also uncertain whether they conquered the inhabitants whom they found when they came, or whether, as Keane thinks, there was a peaceful infiltration, leading to mixed types of skull. An obvious suggestion is that they conquered the earlier population because they possessed the use of bronze ; but others believe that when they first came they had no metals. This knowledge, however, they soon acquired ; they worked not only bronze, but gold and lead, both of which metals exist in Britain, though gold is now hardly ever found in paying quantities. There are very many bronze age camps in England and Scotland, and the remains show that these people kept flocks and herds, grew cereals, and understood weaving. Stonehenge is believed to belong to this period. In all probability, the country was entered by successive tribes of roundheads from different parts and at widely different times.

It is impossible to tell why they have left so little trace on the racial composition of the population.

Even in districts where the Mediterranean type is relatively pure, there are some curious phenomena. Messrs. Fleure and T. C. James have found in North Wales, here and there, families with the lank black hair, sallow complexion, and prominent cheekbones which usually indicate Mongoloid ancestry, and another type with the negroid characteristics of black curly hair and broad noses. Round Plynlimmon they found a nest of extreme dolichocephaly, and a high percentage of red hair. I quote my authority, so that the Welsh may not blame me for observations which they may think unflattering.

The Celts proper seem to have been related to the Germanic stock, being Nordics. They first occupied France and Spain, perhaps about 600 B.C., and soon after this date they crossed over into the British Isles both from France and Germany. This is the race which drove the Etruscans from Lombardy, and captured Rome about 390, after a victory which caused the "dies Alliensis" to be marked in the Roman calendar as supremely unlucky. The Gaulish peril ended for Rome only in 225, at the battle of Telamon. Cowed by this defeat, the Celts did not render to Hannibal the help which he had confidently expected. They continued to occupy the valley of the Po, but the Cisalpine Gauls had a strong Alpine admixture. It may indeed be questioned whether all the migrating Celts were not a mixed race. Herodotus, writing about 435 B.C., reckons the Celts (with the Cynetes) as the furthest people toward the west. They moved in successive waves, and the main body marched north of the Alps.

We are taught to distinguish three waves of Celtic migration in Great Britain. The earliest were the Goidels, whose descendants spoke Erse, Gaelic, and Manx. The second wave, consisting of those whom

Julius Cæsar calls the Celts proper, overran the central and western parts of the island; their descendants speak Welsh. Philologists have called the Goidels the Q Celts, the Welsh and Belgae the P Celts. Their common language was Aryan, but very different from Greek, German, or Slavonic. It was, we are told, rather less distant from primitive Italian. The meaning of the distinction between Q Celts and P Celts is that the former used a Q or K sound in words which the latter pronounced with a P. For example, the Goidels used Ken- in place-names, where the Brythons, the second wave of invaders, used Pen-. The name Britain, it seems, ought to be Pritain. It is interesting to find that when Pytheas of Marseilles visited us about 325 B.C., he called our island the Pretannic Isle, which shows that he came into contact with the P Celts. The Irish called the Picts "Crythni," which seems to be the same word.

It seems rather likely that the Goidels mingled extensively with the earlier, Neolithic or Mediterranean, population, slightly modified by Alpine admixture. But the second wave, the Brythons, drove the Goidels before them into the north and west. It is certain that the present population of Wales, Ireland, and Cornwall is predominantly Mediterranean, and that there is a large Mediterranean element in the Scottish Highlands, while the greater part of the island is predominantly Nordic. Dark hair preponderates in Scotland generally, even in the south-west, where the splendid farmers of Galloway dispute with the Patagonians and some African tribes the honour of being the tallest people in the world. The combination of dark hair with great stature is somewhat unusual in Europe, since the Mediterranean race is rather short. The colour of the hair is less instructive to the ethnologist than the cephalic index, and dark pigment in the eyes acts

as a Mendelian dominant. It follows that the mixture of Nordic and Mediterranean types which is now everywhere in progress, owing to the constant migrations of individuals from one part of the island to another, tends to make the eye-colour of the English people darker in each generation. In the sixteenth century foreign visitors found blue eyes and yellow hair predominant in England; this is not so to-day. Blue eyes are "recessive"; two genuinely blue-eyed parents, it is said, never have a brown-eyed child, whereas a vast number of dark-eyed persons are really half "blues."

The Brythons may or may not have retained a large number of Goidels in a servile condition. They seem to have usually burnt, instead of burying, the bodies of their chiefs, which is unfortunate for the anthropologist; but there is no reason to think that the two waves of Celts were physically distinguishable from each other.

Cæsar tells us that the Belgae had settled in Britain only a short time before he invaded the island. We may safely date this third wave of Celtic immigration as coming in the second century before Christ; and since it is most unlikely that they all came together, greater precision is unnecessary. The Belgae treated the Brythons very much as the latter had treated the Goidels, and as they themselves were to be treated by the Angles and Saxons. They were akin to the Brythons rather than to the Goidels.

In one way the victory of the Celts over the earlier population was complete. They eradicated every trace of the pre-Celtic language or languages, even in their western retreats. It is worth mentioning that the French Bretons, as their name implies, are British Celts of the Brythonic race. They were not however refugees from the Belgic invasion, but were driven out of England much later, in the fifth century after Christ.

Pytheas of Marseilles, who has been already mentioned, was a bold and successful navigator. Eluding the Carthaginian ships which would have stopped him, he struck across from Ushant to Belerium, near the Land's End, where he found comparatively civilized tin-miners. Then he sailed up the Channel as far as Kent, greatly over-estimating the distance of this voyage. He found the people of Kent growing wheat, and drinking the favourite Celtic beverage of mead, beer mixed with honey. Thence he tried to find the sources of the amber trade in the Baltic, but probably failed to enter that sea. Then he circumnavigated Great Britain, and heard about Thule, which in spite of opinions to the contrary I believe to have been Iceland.

The British Celts very early had a gold coinage, copied from the gold staters of Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great, a fact interesting in itself, and throwing light on the wide extent of commerce at this time. They were an artistic people, but cruel to strangers, as Horace says. Human sacrifices were common, and the victims were usually burnt alive. They retained the war-chariot, after their kinsmen the Gauls of France had discarded it and taken to cavalry.

Britain comes into the full light of history when Julius Cæsar, who invaded our island in 55 B.C., repeating the raid shortly afterwards, wrote a history of his campaigns. His motives for attacking Britain were doubtless mixed. The Britons, and their allies the sea-going Veneti of Gaul, had tried to exclude the Roman galleys from the Channel, and Britain was an easy refuge for Gauls who had incurred the displeasure of the Roman commander. But primarily, he was obliged, if possible, to make war pay for itself. He counted, we may suppose, on making high profits from British gold, tin, iron, and pearls, but above all on a still more lucrative traffic, the

sale of captives. This last, however, proved a bad speculation. Cicero says that British slaves are of no use except for rough field labour, and therefore fetch but little money; "of course," he says, "there are no scholars or musicians among them."

My object being to give some account of the races of which the present population of England is composed, I must not allow myself to be led astray into the history of the Roman occupation, which left hardly any traces upon the ethnic character of the people. The Roman garrisons were not to any large extent composed of Italians; there was indeed not much recruiting in Italy under the Empire. It is natural to suppose that the British legions were partly made up out of the British population, and that the children of the camps, who followed their fathers' profession, were mostly born from native mothers. Nor was the number of Italian merchants and traders nearly large enough to have any appreciable effect upon the racial type. The merchants, for the most part, were not permanent residents, and Italy had no surplus population to emigrate. Even the Latin speech, which made an easy and permanent conquest in France and Spain, disappeared with the eagles of the legions, except in the Church and in small literary circles. The Roman conquest of Britain was an incomplete and transitory conquest.

There is not much evidence as to what the Romans thought about the character of the natives. Tacitus tells us that Agricola valued the natural acuteness of the British above the more plodding industry of the Gauls. He adds that as a result of the Roman occupation "there was a gradual yielding to the attractions of vice—such as covered walks and baths and eloquent banquets. This in their ignorance they called civilization; but it was only a part of their enslavement." This, to speak plainly, is

claptrap. The Britons were probably the better for cooking their food, and certainly the better for washing themselves. It was not the diffusion of civilized habits that ruined the Roman Empire.

The famous stone wall which the emperor Severus built (in place of Hadrian's earthworks) across the north of England, shortly before his death, which occurred at York (Eburacum) in 211, was only the westernmost section of a line of fortifications which extended across Europe; and during the unhappy third century, when the rule of the prætorians was producing its worst results, the British wall stood the strain better than the defences along the Rhine and Danube. The island was prosperous, while the continental part of the empire was in chaos, ravaged by *pronunciamientos* which set up one puppet emperor after another. But before the end of this century, about 280, a dark cloud appears on the horizon. It is then that we first hear of the Saxon pirates. One Carausius, who had been appointed to deal with the danger, rebelled against the central authority, and made himself "emperor" of Britain, where he reigned for seven years, relying on his fleet. Diocletian and Maximian failed to wrest the sea-power from him, and were obliged to acknowledge him as a colleague. Carausius struck coins with the heads of the three emperors side by side, inscribed "Carausius and his Brothers," and "The Peace of the three Augusti." Another inscription on his coins is "Renovatio Romanorum." He was murdered in 293, and his murderer and successor Allectus was soon deposed by Constantius. This episode, unimportant in other respects, is interesting as the first beginning of British sea-power. Carausius, as Sir Charles Oman says, was the first British sea-king. The British fleet was in fact strong enough to keep off the Saxons, though raids from Ireland were frequent and trouble-

some. It was not till 364 that we hear of the Saxons again, this time in confederacy with the Picts and Scots. From this point everything went wrong with the defenders, and by the beginning of the fifth century the Roman occupation was coming to an end in a welter of disorder and mutiny, which culminated when Stilicho withdrew a large body of troops to fight against Alaric. In 410, the year after the capture of Rome by the Goths, which sent a shudder through the civilized world, the unhappy Honorius sent a message to the Britons, bidding them to defend themselves. It was a message of despair, but in no sense a recognition of British independence, nor had the natives any feeling that the tie with Rome had been broken.

Nor is it at all fair to say that the Britons made a poor fight after the Roman empire ceased to help them. They beat off the Picts and Scots, and in 550, nearly a century and a half after Honorius had left them to their own devices, half the island still remained unsubdued by the Saxons. Nevertheless, soon after 410, terrible blows began to fall on the British. Nearly all the Roman towns in Britain, says Sir Charles Oman, show signs of having been burnt or deserted at a comparatively early date, and never inhabited again. There is no satisfactory evidence for an independent British Colchester, London, or Lincoln, or even of a survival of York, Chester, or Wroxeter. Bath, Gloucester and Cirencester were in the unconquered part of the country, but they were greatly decayed. Between 410 and 450 the Saxons seem to have wiped out nearly all the towns, and to have massacred the inhabitants. After the battle of Deorham in 577 there is no sign of any more British or Roman life in the country. To the Welshman Gildas, England is a foreign land.

The question has been much discussed, whether

the extermination of the Britons was so complete as some early accounts make out. It is very unusual for even a barbarian army to kill the younger women, who are valuable booty, and we might have expected that some able-bodied men would be spared as serfs. But the evidence, scanty enough, it is true, points to a general massacre. Those who deny this often forget that the Britons were mainly of kindred stock to the Saxons, so that a mixture of blood between them would not cause any greater racial change than intermarriages between English and Germans ; these objectors are usually concerned to prove that the modern English are allied by blood to the dark-haired races which they miscall Celtic. In other words, they wish to prove that a portion of the pre-Celtic Mediterranean race survived all the invasions, and continued to live in their old homes. Such evidence as exists is against the persistence of any considerable Mediterranean element in the population except in the west. Sir Halford Mackinder has a useful chart of the British Isles, to show the "relative nigrescence" of the population. The darkest portions are, as we might expect, Ireland, where however there are some blondes, not so much in Ulster as in the east-central part of the island ; the western Highlands of Scotland, but not the Outer Hebrides ; South Wales ; Cornwall ; and a patch about Hertford and in the Chilterns, which perhaps indicates that primitive fortifications, or some other unknown cause, for a time kept the invaders out of the Thames valley. The blonde type prevails far inland along the whole of the east coast, from Caithness to Kent, and across to Cumberland and Westmorland. Short and dark persons are common in the West Riding of Yorkshire ; it is likely that some of the aborigines took refuge in the Forest of Elmet and so escaped extermination.

There are, however, two other facts which ought

to be taken into consideration. The British towns may have all been burnt and their inhabitants massacred; we know that several of them were; but their decay was inevitable after the retirement of the Romans; for the towns were artificial creations, an integral part of the Roman system of government; town life was neither a British nor a Saxon institution. The English invaders were entirely farmers and warriors before they came to England, and so they remained till after the Conquest. Urban residence, it must be remembered, was in the old days almost a sentence of death to the countryman who had been used to pastoral or semi-nomad conditions. The other consideration is that the climate of our east coasts and midland counties, with their relatively severe winters, is less suited to the constitution of the Mediterranean peoples. It may well be that in the parts of England which were thoroughly settled by the Nordics, the dark-haired population was already scanty when they arrived.

This is not the place to describe the struggle between the invaders and the British. The Britons made at least one vigorous rally, which historians do not forbid us to connect with the name of Artorius or Arthur.

The invaders belonged to the finest Nordic stocks. The Saxons came originally from Holstein, but united with neighbouring tribes to form a Saxon nation. From 286 we hear from Roman historians of the Saxon pirates. The Jutes probably came from Jutland; the Angles are named by Tacitus among the tribes north of the Elbe. Thus the home of our ancestors was what Ptolemy calls the Cimbric Chersonesus; and it really seems as if the whole nation of Angles came over, for they are no more heard of in their old home. They came in small bands under petty captains, and it was long before they combined on a large scale.

Can we distinguish the physical and mental traits of the Saxons, who gave their names to the counties of Sussex, Essex, Middlesex and the Kingdom of Wessex, from those of the Jutes who settled in Kent and the Angles who colonized East Anglia and Northumbria? It is often said that such a distinction is possible; but when we consider that these tribes all came from the same region, and that the Danes and Northmen introduced new blood into the whole of the eastern part of the island north of Kent, such speculations seem to be very hazardous. Mr. Havelock Ellis thinks that the county of Norfolk has produced more than its share of great men, and Devonshire may make the same claim.

Gildas, who wrote about 550, is a poor authority, whom we have to accept *faute de mieux*. He is a Jeremiah, who seems to enjoy painting the condition of the country in the darkest colours. He describes the Celtic kingdoms of south and west Britain as given over to intestine strife, unmolested by the invaders, but decadent. The towns, even those which had not been sacked, were deserted and in ruins. There is no reason to doubt that his statement is substantially true, though it may be a little exaggerated. The decay of the towns was almost universal at this period in the west of Europe.

After the pause already mentioned, the invaders resumed their advance, and settled district after district. The English did not get their Christianity from the Britons, a fact which illustrates the intense hatred between the two races. But they were probably influenced in favour of the new religion by the conversion of their kindred, the continental Franks. Warfare on both sides was internecine. The Welsh spared neither age nor sex after a victory, as when Cadwallon with the help of the Mercian king, Penda, defeated and killed Edwin in 633.

The petty kings were still fighting among them-

selves when the Scandinavian inroads began in the ninth century. At this date Offa of Mercia had established a decided ascendancy. The English were now to suffer all the evils which they had inflicted. The story of the two invasions is very similar. At first appeared small bands under petty chiefs, then came inroads on a larger scale. The object was at first plunder, then settlement. The Scandinavians had by this time occupied the "Cimbric Chersonesus," from which the Jutes, Angles and Saxons had come. For a long time they were quite cut off from the rest of Europe, and gave very little trouble. Their boats were at first unsuited to the open sea, until the conquests of Charlemagne at once roused their fears and stimulated their ambitions. In their later inroads they used large ships, able to hold a hundred and fifty men and more. But even at first, when their boats were small, they were very bold sailors. They sailed round Britain both by the Orkneys and by the Channel. On the sea they were but little interfered with by the English, who had lost their taste for seafaring. It has, indeed, been doubted whether the Englishman is a natural sailor. Lord Fisher gave his opinion—a landsman would hardly have had the courage to say it—that the English are naturally indifferent sailors, and by no means fond of the sea. "It was sheer spirit that turned them into good seamen." In the Old English literature no love of the sea is exhibited; it is spoken of almost with horror. It is certain, at any rate, that at the time of the Danish invasions a nation of born sailors was pitted against a nation of landsmen.

The Vikings, who were still pagans, had a special penchant for sacking monasteries. They began with Lindisfarne in 793; then they fell on Rechru in Dublin Bay, a very rich shrine founded by Columba, and in 802 and 806 sacked Iona. From

820 to 837 they systematically ravaged Ireland. And here we come upon a very interesting piece of ethnological evidence. The Irish called the Danes the Black Strangers, the Norsemen the White Strangers. This is clear testimony that the Danes were at this time not pure Nordics, but partly, as we must suppose, of Alpine stock. A visitor to the Scandinavian countries at the present day observes at once that the Swedes are almost pure Nordics, the Norwegians mainly Nordic but with some Alpine blood, the Danes much more mixed, though preponderantly Nordic. Round heads are common to-day in Denmark, almost absent in Sweden.

In 834 the Danish raids began to be more systematic. England was at that time strong in defence, and it was not till 865–878 that a great confederacy of Danish chiefs attempted the conquest of the island. The invasion was repelled with great difficulty by the genius of Alfred, but for several generations the Danes occupied and colonized a great part of England. The history of this occupation is almost entirely lost ; we know little more than the names of the kings who ruled at York. In 876 a Danish army was starved out near Bridgnorth, after losing the fleet that brought them. The Danes were undoubtedly better armed than the English. They were trained fighting men, with steel helmets and coats of mail. Having complete command of the sea, they could generally escape after a defeat, and defeat was unlikely unless the numbers of the enemy were overwhelmingly superior ; for by this time most of the English were peaceful ploughmen. As time went on, the English were obliged to fortify " boroughs " for defence, while the Danes increased their mobility on land by providing themselves with horses. These methods and devices belong to military history.

Fighting went on between the English and the Norsemen ; but Cnut did not conquer the island ;

he was offered the kingdom by the Wotan of Wessex, no doubt in order to secure peace. He never treated England as a dependency of Denmark, and was in fact one of the best kings we have had.

There is much Scandinavian blood in our veins, but it simply reinforced the Nordic element, which is always in danger of being diminished, since in every war the Nordic is the first to enlist, the foremost in battle, and the first to fall. The Danish part of England was between Thames and Tees ; the Norsemen seized the Orkneys, Shetlands, Caithness, the Western Isles, and the Isle of Man ; they also left traces of their presence at Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Milford, Solway, and Morecambe.

Wherever the Nordics settle among an Alpine or Mediterranean population, they usually hold their own for a time as an aristocracy, but are finally absorbed or expelled. Revolutions as well as wars are injurious to them. At the French Revolution, one of the cries against the "aristocrats" was, "Send them back to the German marshes from which they came" ; and the dark-haired canaille who gathered round the guillotine shouted with delight when a blonde head was held up for them to look at. The same racial hatred has sent thousands of Germanic Russians to their deaths since 1917.

The Normans were of predominantly Nordic stock, but were apparently much mixed, since their dark hair is noticed as one of their characteristics. They spoke French, but were not Frenchmen. Traditionally, they are supposed to have been a very powerful and handsome race, with dark eyes and hair, aquiline noses, and a haughty appearance. The few effigies that remain bear out this description, and the Norman nose has been admired in many of our old families, till the cult excited the mirth of George Meredith. The so-called Norman type certainly exists ; it is especially common, I think among the

less distinguished officers of the British army. But we must remember that William's army was a horde of miscellaneous adventurers from all parts; it included many Flemings. And they came almost without women.

The Norman Conquest, which may have depended on the accident that Harold, and not William, was killed at the battle of Hastings, was probably an almost unmitigated misfortune to England. Two hundred years of foreign rule never yet did a nation anything but harm, and our long entanglement with France was disastrous to both. As Mr. Innes says, before the Conquest the churl (ceorl) considered himself a freeman, but he occupied his land upon condition of rendering service to some one else who was looked upon, or was coming to be looked upon, as the actual owner. After the Norman Conquest, the churls in general, now named by the Normans *villani* or villagers, lost their status as freemen altogether in practice, though not in theory. The political freedom of the churl in Saxon times cannot (Mr. Innes adds) be accounted for unless the occupiers as well as the lords of the soil belonged to the conquering race. This, with the disappearance of the language, the religion, and the customs generally of the conquered Britons, remains as an evidence of their general extirpation which altogether outweighs the arguments adduced to the contrary.

The factors which make up the English people have now been enumerated. Since the Norman Conquest the infiltration of foreign blood has been slight. The largest immigration has been from Ireland, within the last hundred years. The northern Irish are a good stock; but the presence in our towns, especially in Glasgow and Liverpool, of a large element from South Ireland, has not been advantageous either to the national character or to the smooth working of our institutions. Early

immigrants, first of skilled Flemish artisans and then of French Protestants, have enriched our national stock. The number of eminent men who can trace their descent from French Huguenots is remarkable. On the other side, emigration has carried away, in a stream the volume of which varies greatly, many very promising families and potential fathers of families; but as long as they remain under our flag we need not regard them as in any way lost to their country.

There have, however, been other changes, unconnected with emigration and immigration. Social conditions and customs are sometimes favourable to the intrinsic qualities of a population, and sometimes deleterious. In the middle ages there was a constant trickle from the country to the town; the enormous death-rate of the towns prevented any rapid increase of population. The loss of the flower of our youth in war was not great, since armies were small and the means of destruction far less efficient than in modern times. If there was any differential birth-rate, it probably operated in favour of the well-to-do; for the difficulty of finding cottages led to a custom of rather late marriages among the peasantry. The effect of clerical celibacy may have been, as Galton suggested, to sterilize the gentler and more thoughtful element in the population; but many of the priests were celibates only in name, and many others were selected for reasons independent of their intellect or character. It is only since the industrial revolution, and increasingly in our own day, that we have to lament actively dysgenic influences tending to lower the intrinsic value of the people as a whole.

The question of physical deterioration is a very difficult one. We have all heard of the Eglinton tournament, when the modern gentlemen found that they could not get into the armour worn by knights

in the middle ages. The majority of the coats of mail shown in public or private collections look very small. But more evidence is required; it seems very improbable that the fighting barons and knights were men of poor physique. On the other hand, it can be proved by statistics that the average stature of the Danes has been raised about an inch and a half in the last thirty years. There does seem to be evidence that the women of the upper and upper middle classes are taller than their great-grandmothers, and it is possible that the men also of these classes are rather taller. Emerson, eighty years ago, and recently Mr. Pryce Collier, have expressed the opinion that the English are heavier than the Americans; but this I cannot believe. The fact is that the physical differences between classes are greater here than elsewhere. Anyone who has visited our public schools, perhaps especially Eton, must have been struck by the great height of the elder boys, and the same impression is made by entering (*e.g.*) a ball-room where the "well-born" and fashionable meet together. The average height of the aristocracy must be fully three inches above that of the working-men. The country folk, particularly in the north, are fairly well grown; but the wretched physique of the slum-dwellers is noticed by all good observers. They look as if they belonged to a different race, inferior not only to the upper class, but to their own class in continental countries. The rejections for military service, on physical grounds, were alarmingly high in the Great War; and many regiments of those who, under stress of need, were accepted were markedly inferior in physique to the French and German regiments. It is improbable that any such miserable specimens of humanity survived the rougher conditions of the middle ages. The champions of heredity and the champions of environment, of nature and nurture,

have different explanations of these phenomena, and unfortunately political prejudice often interferes with the impartiality which ought to be shown in a scientific discussion. We shall be safe in rejecting the most extreme positions on both sides, but certainly not in contending that there is no intrinsic inferiority in the crowds of unwanted children who infest the alleys of our great cities.

There is one other subject which belongs to this chapter—the language which has been gradually beaten out during the many centuries of our history. The English tongue is less sonorous than the Italian of Dante, though Tennyson noted as a defect in Italian the monotonous repetition of the broad *a*. On the other side, he admitted that English is apt to *hiss*; it is unlucky that the plurals of our nouns and the singulars of our verbs both end in *s*. French excels in precision, and is a perfect instrument in the hand of a good prose writer; German, though not euphonious, will do any work to which it is put. Ancient Greek probably exceeds all other languages in beauty, precision, and flexibility combined. But we may claim that English is very high among the great languages of the world. I will venture to quote from Mr. Galsworthy, himself one of the best among our living writers. "I often wonder," he says, "if I did not know English, what I should think of the sound of it, well talked. I believe I should esteem it a soft speech, very pleasant to the ear, varied but emphatic, singularly free from guttural or metallic sounds, restful, dignified, and friendly. I believe I should choose it, well spoken, before any language in the world, as the medium of expression of which we would tire last. Blend though it be, hybrid between two main stocks, and tinctured by many a visiting word, it has acquired a rich harmony of its own, a vigorous individuality. It is worthy of any destiny, however wide."

Its destiny is wide indeed. The world-importance of English is steadily growing. In the war between China and Japan negotiations between the belligerent commanders were conducted in English. The poems of Rabindranath Tagore, as he told me himself, are read, in India, chiefly in English. At the Northern Peace Congress at Stockholm in 1919 an inquiry was made of the delegates as to which of the great languages was most suitable for universal use. One voted for German, eight for French, one for Latin or Spanish, five for Ido or Esperanto ; twenty-nine out of fifty-four voted for English. The Report said : " English must be taught in all the schools in the world, optional in the elementary and compulsory in the higher schools." Even in France, that most self-sufficing of countries, where a knowledge of foreign languages is, or was till lately, rare, a great deal of admirable work has lately been done on our literature. In Scandinavia and Germany excellent books on English philology are produced almost every year. And yet we must admit that no language is worse spoken or worse written. There is no such sharp difference between the French spoken by the educated and by the uneducated as there is in English, and certainly no French writer who cared for his reputation would be guilty of the solecisms and slipshod composition of many popular English authors. We ought to accustom ourselves to the idea, universally accepted in France, that our language is a precious deposit, which can be preserved from corruption and degradation only by diligent care and conscientiousness in speaking and writing. It is not desirable that pronunciation should be a shibboleth of class-distinctions. The progress of education has already diminished this evil ; whether it will be possible to preserve any of the local dialects, some of which have a pleasing historical interest, is uncertain. But few will deny

that the masterpieces of our literature ought to hold a more prominent place in our national education than they do at present, or that careful composition in English ought to be a necessary subject in all secondary education.

The language that we speak was brought with them by the invaders in the fifth and sixth centuries. Hardly a trace of the British tongue remains, except a few Celtic words which have come to us through the French, and a few names of rivers and the like. Nor did the Romans in Britain leave us any fragments of their language ; Latin perished in the invasion, and our Latin words came in later. The chief exception is in a group of words connected with Christian worship, such as *bishop*, *candle*, *creed*, *font*, *monk*, and *priest*. The invaders however brought with them many words derived from Latin, which they had annexed before the migration ; such are the familiar words *battle*, *cheese*, *wine*, *pepper*, *copper*, *pound*, *inch*, *mile*, and *mint*. (*H. Bradley*.) The West Germanic tongue had split into High and Low German, and Low German was subdivided into Frisian, Dutch, and Flemish. English belongs to the Low German group.

Early English grammar was originally very complicated, with many inflections. The simplification of a language is not a sign of decay, but of advancing civilization ; useless elaboration is discarded as the result of common sense. The speech of the English did not change much for about five hundred years after the settlement in England. In the time of King Alfred the genders were as irrational as they still are in German ; *hand* was feminine, *foot* (fōt) masculine, and *wife* (wif) neuter. The declensions were even more complicated than in modern German. We often congratulate ourselves on having rid our language of these troublesome and useless encumbrances, and we have certainly gained by doing so.

But the causes are less flattering to our national pride. The Danes spoke a dialect called Old Norse, which was intelligible to the Anglo-Saxons ; but the purity of grammar probably suffered when the two nations tried to converse. Much more important was the submergence of the English after the Norman Conquest. It is the educated class who resist linguistic changes, and a written language decays much less easily than one which is only spoken. For several generations English practically ceased to be a literary language, and was but little used by the educated and dominant class. When at last it emerged from its obscurity, it was profoundly changed, and the change was towards simplification.

Our authorities give long lists of Scandinavian words which became part of the English language. They include such common words as *take, cast, call, get, hit, leg, skin, knife, loose, root, want, wrong,* as well as forms like *she, they, them.*

The Normans were originally Scandinavians, but had lived for a hundred and fifty years in France. Their speech supplied nearly all the learned words which were in use, and many others. In some we have kept the earlier pronunciation which has now been lost in France, for example in *charity* and *beast.* As the immediate consequence of the Norman Conquest, the speech of Normandy and Picardy came in ; with the Angevins the dialect of central France became fashionable. In a few instances we have preserved both forms, as in *warden* and *guardian, catch* and *chase.* In more recent borrowings we made clumsy attempts to reproduce the French pronunciation, as in *chaperon* and *buffoon,* whereas in *bacon* we lay the stress on the first syllable, which is the tendency in English.

We are all familiar with the explanation—a rather humiliating one—of the double names in English for the animals whose flesh we eat. Wamba the

Jester, in *Ivanhoe*, calls attention to it. The living animals, *ox, sheep, calf, swine, deer*, continued to be named in good Anglo-Saxon ; but when they were killed and carried to the castle of the feudal superior, the Norman baron, they became Frenchified as *beef, mutton, veal, pork, bacon*, and *venison*. Norman too are the names for *master, servant, butler, dinner*, and *supper*, and numerous terms connected with law and government. All the titles of nobility are French, except *earl* ; and an earl's wife has to be called *countess*, since there was no native title for the wife of a nobleman. Convenience in speaking has often decided the fate of a word. As Mr. Bradley remarks, the French *face* is much more convenient than the native synonyms, *onlete, onsene*, and *wlite*.

Before the middle of the fourteenth century French was still in common use. The first English speech heard in Parliament was made in 1363. There was as yet no standard English. The main dialects were those of Wessex, Mercia, and Northumbria. The dialect of the East Midlands has won, and is now the standard English. It had been more affected by Scandinavian influence than the tongue of Wessex. Its victory was perhaps decided by the accident that it was the native speech of Chaucer, and also of Wyclif. Chaucer naturalized many French words which, as far as is known, were not in use before him, and Wyclif introduced many new words from the Vulgate. These two great writers may be called the founders of the English that we know, and in so doing they helped to suppress the other dialects, which never attained the dignity of a literary language. The exception was in the North, where the Scots, politically separate from England, used and gave literary form to their own variety of the Northern dialect.

The Renaissance was a time of bold experiments. Archaisms, old colloquialisms, Latinisms, were all

tried, and scholars like Sir John Cheke laboured hard to prune the luxuriance of contemporary writing. "I am of this opinion," said Cheke, "that our own tongue should be written clean and pure, unmixed and unmangled with the borrowing of other tongues, wherein if we take not heed by time, ever borrowing and never paying, she shall be fain to keep her house as bankrupt." If this severe school had gained their object, we should have lost both Shakespeare and Milton as we know them; but their crusade against "inkhorn terms" was not unnecessary. Shakespeare took liberties with grammar which were no model for lesser men, and Milton too often used Latinisms which are not English at all; but these experiments had to be tried, and the Renaissance period left us with a language of great richness and flexibility.

The Authorised Version of the Bible, says Mr. Mair, is the supreme example of early English prose style. "In it English has lost its roughness and its affectation and retained its strength." The translators had before them all the earlier translations, and especially the excellent Tudor version of Tindal. But it was substantially a new version; its supremacy was undisputed, and it quickly began to colour both the spoken and the written speech. From John Bunyan to John Bright it has inspired much that is most sincere and vigorous in our language. Eminent educationalists in our own day have pleaded for its retention as a necessary part of primary education. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, after quoting the emphatic words of Cardinal Newman on the value of the "Protestant Bible" as literature, adds: "If that be true, or less than gravely overstated; if the English Bible hold this unique place in our literature; if it be at once a monument, an example, and (best of all) a well of English undefiled, no stagnant water, but quick, running, curative, refreshing, vivifying;

may we not agree to require the weightiest reason why our instructors should continue to hedge in the temple and pipe the fountain off in professional conduits, forbidding it to irrigate freely our ground of study ? " Scaliger's disparaging remarks, written when Spenser, Bacon, and Shakespeare were alive, is a curiosity. *" Linguam habent, sed mixtam ex colluvie aliarum linguarum ; nam est mera loquendi farrago."*

In this chapter it is only necessary to point out the importance of the coincidence in time of the Authorised Version and Shakespeare's plays. The two together tended to fix the language nearly in the form which it has retained ever since. The English language has been saved from the degradation which always threatens a living language, mainly by the possession of a few great books. We have never taken the trouble to preserve its purity, which the French regard as a sacred duty ; but so long as the masterpieces of English writing, or even only one or two of them, are in everyone's hands, there exists an accepted standard of good style, which influences all who try to write well. It is true that such mischievous modern inventions as dictating to a shorthand writer, or speaking into a phonograph, have played havoc with good writing; but on the other hand the newest discovery, that of broadcasting, might be made the vehicle of teaching a standard of correct pronunciation to all parts of the English-speaking world. The great mass of half-educated readers is a difficulty and a temptation, for which the only remedy is more and better education. We have already useful societies like the English Association, which exist to watch over the interests of the language and improve popular taste. There is hope that our learned bodies may co-operate with similar societies in the United States with this object. On the other hand, it is easy to speak too disparagingly

of the current modern style, as illustrated by the leading article, the platform speech or sermon, or the popular essay. The practised writer or speaker generally contrives to say what he means to say, to say it shortly, and to make his meaning clear. These are no mean merits; we shall not find them in all the classics of English prose. The distinction between literature and journalism is becoming blurred; but journalism gains as much as literature loses. The language is so rich, and has such great possibilities, that there is a keen pleasure in playing on such an instrument, as there is in studying carefully those who have brought the fullest and most exquisite music out of it, such as Milton, Shelley, and Tennyson. There is a homely strength in our wealth of monosyllables, in which no other European language approaches English. In the hands of a master, this peculiarity may produce exquisite short poems, such as Stevenson's *Under the wide and starry sky*, or Bourdillon's *The night has a thousand eyes*. Even a simple epitaph like—

> "My friends so dear,
> As you pass by,
> So as you are,
> So once was I.
> And as I am,
> So shall you be;
> Remember Death
> And think on me."

would lose something undefinable, but distinctively English, by being translated into the beautiful Greek of the Anthology.

It is thought by some critics that the future changes in our language—and there must be changes—will probably be importations from the other side of the Atlantic, where the majority of English-speaking people already dwell. But these things are not, or should not be, decided by a majority vote. If, as

seems probable, we have passed the zenith of our wealth and material prosperity, we shall have all the more leisure to cultivate the things of the mind, and make England, as it ought to be, the spiritual home of all "who speak the tongue that Shakespeare spake, the faith and morals hold that Milton held."

# CHAPTER II

## THE SOUL OF ENGLAND

Is there such a thing as National Character? We assume that there is, and it has lately been convenient to us to defend the very doubtful thesis that every society which has enough of a distinct tradition to be called a character, has a natural right to political independence and what is called in the jargon of the hour self-determination.

It is plain that we cannot answer our question till we have decided what constitutes nationality. In the brief discussion which follows I wish to acknowledge a debt to Mr. Delisle Burns.

John Stuart Mill says that any portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nationality if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and any others, and which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people. It is further necessary that they should desire to be under the same government, and that it should be government by themselves or a portion of themselves. This definition, as Mr. Burns says, would partly apply to almost any group, and partly only to an ideal society.

Professor McDougall, though with caution and some reserves, accepts the theory of a race spirit, or group consciousness, which is not merely the sum or resultant of individual consciousnesses. This theory, which is held by many modern philosophers and psychologists, seems to me to involve an introduction of mysticism where it is least appropriate; but it is not necessary to argue the matter here. He is on firmer ground when he says that, national characteristics, are in the main the expressions of different traditions. The importance of tradition is worth emphasizing. Renan too says, "That which causes men to form a people is the recollection of

great things which they have done together, and the will to accomplish new things." Thus he adds a common ideal, as equally important with common memories. A nation, says another writer, is any group which feels itself to be a nation—a definition which favours those fissiparous movements which in our time have broken up several larger aggregates.

However, as a rule we think we know what a nation means, and we are ready with thumb-nail sketches of our neighbours, and even of ourselves. We think of the Scot as canny, thrifty, fond of metaphysics and controversial theology, and perhaps slow to understand a joke. This description may apply to the Lowlander, and to his near kinsman the north country Englishman; it clearly does not suit the Highlander. We think of the Jew as keen in money-making, fond of display if rich, and averse to physical exertion. We remember that the Romans found the Frenchmen of their day studious of the military art and of witty conversation; the modern Frenchman, we say, still exhibits those characteristics. Ranke was strongly of this opinion. "Ambitious, warlike, incited by national pride, the French have kept their neighbours in constant excitement, sometimes liberating the oppressed, more often oppressing the free." We are ready to describe the typical Spaniard, the typical German, and the typical American. For ourselves we have the portly and good-natured John Bull, who in a cartoon which moved Ruskin's wrath is represented as "guarding his pudding." Our characteristics, we say, are a love of liberty, justice, and duty (so Bishop Creighton has it); we are honest but dull and stupid, for which reason we are frequently outwitted by the nimbler intellects of our rivals. Foreign nations do not seem to admit either our superior high-mindedness or our stupidity; but they grant us great tenacity. England, the French say, is the country of will.

These judgments are mostly very crude. Circumstances have much to do with the impression that a country makes abroad. Napoleon called the English a nation of shop-keepers, which is very inappropriate, for the English have never been very good shop-keepers. They have excelled in manufactures and commerce, but not in shop-keeping, which demands a more rigid care for the pence than is often found among Anglo-Saxons. A ruling class may represent a country abroad and may there display the qualities which foreigners come to regard as characteristic of the nation as a whole, whereas in reality the masses have habits and ideals unlike those of the oligarchs. A nation governed by an aristocracy may seem to be high-spirited, warlike, contemptuous of trade and manual work; when the middle class is in power the same nation may appear pacific and fond of money; under universal suffrage it may display very different characteristics. Besides all this, foreign conquest, emigration and immigration, and a differential birth-rate, may produce great changes in what is called the national character. For instance, the conquest of a country by Nordic invaders may add to the population those enterprising and restless qualities which belong to that race, and subsequently the submergence of the Nordics by another race, such as the Alpine, may give the nation the quality of stubborn tenacity in place of the chivalrous and adventurous disposition which formerly distinguished it. Writers like Mr. Lothrop Stoddard, who attach great and possibly excessive importance to these racial characteristics, think that the French nation has become more "Alpine" both in blood and character since the middle ages. Certainly the behaviour of the soldiers in the Great War belied the traditional opinions about the qualities of French and English. The joviality and irrepressible gaiety of the British was contrasted with the tenacity and

grimness of the French soldiery. Lastly, besides class differences, and changes from one period to another, there are provincial peculiarities which may be important. Even within a compact nation there may be great local differences, which cannot escape the notice even of a travelling stranger. In Spain, for example, the Galician is unlike the Andalusian, and the Catalan quite different from both.

These considerations may prevent us from following, without much caution, those writers who have romantically assigned fixed characters to the nations of Europe. But in spite of this, I think we may venture to claim certain qualities as characteristic of the English people, without attempting to decide whether they are racial, or due to our geographical position, our history, or our traditions.

Since the days of the Saxons and Vikings, the English temper has been the temper of an independent, free-spoken people, who in ordinary times are refractory to discipline and impatient of restraint, each man feeling himself fit to rule ; but in times of danger ready to combine, to form voluntary associations, to obey the commanders whom they have chosen, and to trust them until they have proved themselves incompetent. Fifteen hundred years ago Sidonius Apollinaris describes the Saxons as he had seen them—ferocious barbarians, their faces painted blue, their long fair hair falling over their foreheads ; shy and awkward among courtiers, but turbulent and animated among their ships. " One would think," he says, " that each oarsman was himself the arch-pirate." We can trace this independent spirit all through our early history, till the time came to break entirely with the medieval theory of politics both in Church and State. The rulers of the land then defiantly proclaimed that " the English Church hath always been thought, and is at this hour, sufficient and meet of itself, without the intermedd-

ling of any exterior persons, to administer its own affairs and duties." Similarly in secular matters, " By sundry old authorities, histories and chronicles it is manifestly declared and expressed that this realm of England is an Empire "—that is, a sovereign independent nation—"and so hath been accepted in the world, governed by one supreme head and king having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same."

Among the various early descriptions of the national character we may select that of Andrea Trevisano, Venetian Ambassador in 1497. " The English are great lovers of themselves and of everything belonging to them. They think that there are no other men like themselves, and no other world but England ; and whenever they see a handsome foreigner, they say that he looks like an Englishman, and that it is a great pity he should not be an Englishman ; and when they set any delicacy before a foreigner they ask him if such a thing is made in his country." Count Magalotti, who accompanied Cosmo de Medici on a visit to Charles II in 1669, finds that the English " are by nature proud and phlegmatic in their behaviour, so that they never hurry those who work for them by an indiscreet impatience, but suffer them to go on at their own pleasure and according to their ability. This proceeds from their melancholy temperament, for which those who live in the north are more remarkable than those who live in the south, the former being saturnine and the latter more lively. They consider a long time before they come to a determination, but having once decided, their resolution is irrevocable, and they maintain their opinion with the greatest obstinacy. The English are men of a handsome countenance and shape, and of an agreeable complexion, which they owe to their climate and to the salubrity of the air, and to their use of beer rather than wine. They are

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of a most manly spirit, and valiant even to rashness in war both by land and sea."

The stoicism of the Englishman in pain and trouble has been noted by so many observers, that we may admit it as a national trait. Mr. Page, the American Ambassador in London during the Great War, was greatly impressed by the dignity and self restraint shown by English mourners of both sexes, who repressed all external signs of the grief which they were feeling. He also said (not, in this case, from personal observation) that the English soldier dies silently in hospital, "as if he had a secret with his Maker," whereas the continental soldier, equally gallant in action, weeps when he is told that his wounds are mortal. This stoicism is an aristocratic quality, but it is found in all classes. All Englishmen feel that, especially in the presence of foreigners, they must allow no signs of weakness to escape them. The well-known story of *The Private of the Buffs*, who was offered his life if he would kow-tow to a Chinese mandarin, and preferred to die, though his Indian fellow-captives made no difficulty about prostrating themselves according to the manner of the country, is characteristic.

References to the gluttony of the English are very common from the earliest time. Higden, who lived about 1350, says of them: "They woneth to gluttony more than other men, and are more costly in meat and drink and clothing." William of Malmesbury mentions the heavy drinking of the English at the time of the Conquest. Sorbière, a Frenchman, in the reign of Charles II, reports that "the English may be easily brought to anything, provided you fill their bellies, let them have freedom of speech, and do not bear too hard upon their lazy temper." Leo von Rozmital, a Bohemian Baron, visited England in 1466, and attended the banquet after the churching of Queen Elizabeth Woodville.

He reports that "the women and maids who served the Queen at table knelt as long as she ate, and she ate nigh three hours." (*Sie ass bei drein Stunden*). The northern races have always been hearty eaters, and the comparative prosperity which our island enjoyed from early times no doubt increased the temptation to over-indulgence. The richer classes have always gorged themselves with flesh, till within living memory, and there is still much gross gluttony in the middle class, especially in the north of England, and among the miners. The poor were formerly unable to get much butcher's meat, except at certain times of the year; but the importation of foreign frozen meat has made a great difference in their diet. Flesh-eating twice or even three times a day is no longer regarded as a luxury for the few. In the time of the Tudors, the baronial breakfast was a Gargantuan meal. A Northumberland household-book of 1512 assigns to my lord and lady a daily provision, at breakfast, of a quart of beer and a quart of wine, and since it was in Lent, salt fish, herrings, and sprats. On flesh days half a chine of mutton or a chine of boiled beef was provided. This fare would have satisfied Homer's Achaeans.

Another interesting foreign criticism is that of Muralt, a Swiss, whose *Lettres sur les Anglais* belong to the end of the seventeenth century. He says that the English are a good-natured people, very rich, and so well nourished that they sometimes die of obesity. They hate cruelty so much that it is ordained by royal proclamation that the fish and ducks in the ponds shall be properly fed. And yet they allow the prisoners in their gaols to die of hunger. "The great cruelty of the English lies in permitting evil rather than doing it." Our country has unquestionably taken the lead in forbidding and reprobating cruelty to animals, and it is interesting to find that this characteristic was already observable more than

two hundred years ago. It is a part of modern ethics, a duty which has become more obvious since Darwin taught us that the lower animals, as we call them, are literally our distant cousins. The obligation is universally acknowledged and usually observed in Protestant countries, though the popularity of field sports has hitherto resisted protests which in principle seem to be justified; in southern Europe public opinion on this subject is still pre-Darwinian. It is frequently even denied that the lower animals have any rights.

Neglect of prisoners, and harsh treatment of them, were a blot upon our civilization long after the time when Muralt wrote; but it is not certain that the condition of prisons was worse in England than on the Continent.

It is well known that the sober and undifferentiated dress of men is quite a modern institution. It is not really democratic, since an old or badly made suit of clothes is a more humiliating sign of poverty than the earlier distinctive dress of a ploughman, carter, or apprentice. Modern male dress has the further disadvantages of being ugly, expensive, and wasteful of time. In the middle ages foreigners were struck by the ostentation which Englishmen showed in their dress, each class imitating the class above them. In England, it was said, "a yeoman arrayeth himself as a squire, a squire as a knight, a knight as a duke, and a duke as a king."

Even the peasant women, van Meteren says, (1558–1612) wore gloves, as the ladies of the court do in Holland and Germany. He adds that they put on their best clothes for a journey, contrary to the practice of other nations. This curious habit still prevails in the lower middle class. Frederick, Duke of Wurtemberg, in 1592 found the Londoners "magnificently apparelled and extremely proud and overbearing." Male dress was perhaps most becoming

under the Plantagenets, most sumptuous under the Tudors. There was not however much difference in this respect between France and England, except that the middle class Englishman could afford better clothes than the corresponding class in France. Shakespeare speaks of the carelessness and strangeness of an Englishman's apparel, as it might have appeared to a cultivated Venetian; but I have not come upon any contemporary foreign criticisms to the same effect. In quite modern times it is well known that the French accuse us, and especially our women, of lack of the artistic sense in dress. To a male observer, the chief fault seems to be a too slavish following of fashions made in Paris.

The laziness of our race is often noticed by foreigners, and without much contradiction till the industrial revolution altered the habits of the people. In the nineteenth century, it is true, French observers reported that the English "work fiercely"; but the older habits have now reasserted themselves, and it cannot be questioned that the average Englishman has at present no taste for the untiring, laborious diligence of the German. The slackness of the British workman excites the surprise and contempt of all foreign observers, especially of the Americans, who rightly see in it a very ominous symptom of national deterioration. Economic heresies may have something to do with the prevalent restriction of output; but the American or German worker could not be induced to fritter away half his working hours; self-respect and a natural love of activity would make systematic "ca'canny" intolerable to him. Laziness is a vice which we share with the natives of some hot countries, but with no other northern Europeans. It is, of course, by no means confined to the labouring class.

Some French visitors have complained of our rudeness and arrogance; others who have been led

to expect these qualities have affirmed that we do not deserve the censure. They have added very truly that "the English do not trouble themselves much about us when they do not know us." There are good-mannered and bad-mannered people in every country. But there is no doubt that there was great brutality of manners in the north of England even a hundred years ago. Novels like *Wuthering Heights* are evidence of this. Nor can it reasonably be denied that in the half-century after Waterloo a certain insular pride which had been noticeable in the eighteenth century took an offensive form. Underbred Englishmen and Englishwomen gave us a bad name on the Continent, and even *Punch*, which is one of our most valued national possessions, sometimes echoed the insolence towards other nations which made Lord Palmerston popular at home and very odious abroad. It was an old complaint, for Froissart says that, "Englishmen are so proud that they set store by no nation except their own"; and even Defoe says that the English are "the most churlish people alive to foreigners, so that all men think an Englishman the devil." Goldsmith's lines; "Pride in their port, defiance in their eye, we see the lords of human kind pass by," have often been quoted against us. It would be easy to find examples of boastful language in earlier times, as when Milton calmly asserts that if God has some unusually difficult task on hand, He gives it to His Englishmen to carry out. Our pride has always been mixed with pious gratitude. "The English," said Mark Twain, "are mentioned in the Bible; the meek-spirited shall possess the earth." Michelet finds in our country "pride personified in a people." Seeley speaks of the "kind of Deuteronomic religion" which we made for ourselves in the nineteenth century; as a reward for our moral superiority our trade went up and our

national debt diminished. But the most amusing piece of brag is an utterance of Sir R. Wingfield in the reign of Henry VIII. "As the English nation has always surpassed the French in valour and good faith, so it cannot be judged inferior to it in antiquity or dignity, or in the size of its territory (!) or in learning and capacity." Shakespeare too is not afraid of some full-blooded boasting, but in such passages he usually observes dramatic propriety. Patriotic poetry must be judged leniently, except when it stimulates hatred against national rivals.

These examples of arrogance seem to living Englishmen to belong to a past age, and we resent having them brought up against us as if they were characteristic of the England of George V. We are conscious of having been in a chastened temper since the Boer War, which revealed to us the insecurity of our position and the jealousy of foreign powers. We have indeed been struggling against paralysing attacks of pessimism, which we half put aside rather by an effort of will than from intellectual conviction. Pride and arrogance are the last faults which we think could be rightly charged against us at present. And yet we find that these same old charges are still heard, and from the Americans, of whom the continental press justly remarked at the time of the Venezuela crisis; "America can now give the English a lesson in arrogance and brutality." The American notion that the English are arrogant may be chiefly an inherited prejudice dating back to the days of Palmerston or even earlier; but it is probably in part due to the fact that we are not accustomed to be accosted by strangers without an introduction, and instinctively repel such a liberty by stiffness of manner. In any case, the accusation is no longer true, and we need not trouble ourselves about it. All that remains of our former pride is a wholesome indifference to the opinions of foreign nations, which

we find to be generally ill-informed and frequently biassed.

There are several other legends about our national character, which are not worth discussing at length. It is an old joke, after Froissart, that we take our pleasures sadly; this could hardly be affirmed of the masses to-day. On the other hand "merry England" probably only meant that England is a pleasant country to live in, though it may possibly be taken from Henry of Huntingdon, *De Praerogativis Angliae:*

> "Anglia plena iocis, gens libera, digna iocari."

The French have been fond of dwelling on the proneness of Englishmen to commit suicide. A French writer, Pierre Jean Grosley (about 1770), informs his countrymen that great precautions are taken to block up the approaches to the Thames, lest the sight of water should tempt passers-by to drown themselves. "Yet what precautions can prevent those who are resolved to die from carrying their resolve into effect? That it is impossible to prevent this mischief I am convinced by the shocking sight of twenty skulls found in the bed of the Thames, where the foundations of a new bridge were being dug." Even Englishmen shared the delusion. Young, in his famous *Night Thoughts* wrote:—

> "O Britain, infamous for suicide!
> In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head,
> Wash the dire stain, nor shock the Continent!"

Vital statistics have finally destroyed this legend. It is indeed true that barbarous peoples seldom commit suicide; it is a habit of civilized races and classes. But our country has no bad pre-eminence in this dubious result of culture. Our suicide rate, while higher than that of Ireland, is much lower than that of the militarized nations of the Continent. The number of suicides culminates, I believe, in

Saxony. The practice of carrying arms increases the number of suicides, as well as the number of homicides.

Our enemies have constantly accused us of "perfidy" and "hypocrisy." We might fairly ask on what occasions we have been perfidious, for our accusers seldom condescend to be explicit. Our diplomacy has generally been straightforward, if judged by the low standard which prevails in international relations. No deep-laid Machiavellian plots can justly be laid to our charge. Indeed, our frequent changes of government would make any consistent foreign policy, and above all a secret and crafty foreign policy, very difficult. We have been fortunate, and our simple methods have sometimes succeeded in thwarting the much more subtle calculations of our rivals. Other nations have ascribed this success to superior cunning, disguised under a cloak of innocence, and so they think they have a ground for the charge of hypocrisy. The expressionless face of the Englishman, and his apparent want of interest in serious subjects, undoubtedly encouraged the Central European powers to underrate our intellect and energy. Some of them have complained that we deceived them about ourselves, to their own undoing. Mr. Wickham Steed, who has an almost unrivalled knowledge of continental peoples, says very truly: "There are few people in the world whose acts are more constantly sincere than those of Englishmen." But, he proceeds to say, Englishmen act from instinct and not from logic; and in this way they often appear inconsistent. The English have, he says, an understanding *heart*, rather than an understanding head. Perhaps however the distinction is not so much between instinct and intellect, or between heart and head, as between the logical and the practical reason. A nation which has been "in business" for centuries believes in a "deal," with

concessions on both sides, as usually the best way of composing a quarrel ; and we think we have observed that the only irreparable mistakes are those which are made by consistent intellectualists or strict logicians. The problems of life are too fluid for a rigid *Real-Politik*, as the problems of religion are too fluid for the scholastic philosophy.

This may serve as an answer to the charges of perfidy and hypocrisy. But the English distrust of logic is a deep-seated characteristic of the national character, and a little more must be said about it. The Englishman is constitutionally averse to general ideas and abstract questions. Bishop Creighton was so much irritated by this state of mind that he said : " An Englishman not only has no ideas ; he hates an idea when he meets one." This distrust of general ideas has been often shown in our history. Our countrymen were not really stirred by the Crusades ; they watched the rhodomontades and vapourings, the heroics and the blood-lust of the French Revolution with mingled contempt and horror. Marxian socialism made few converts among us, and Bolshevism attracts only a few *detraqués* and moral maniacs. We once took up the theory of divine right, and summarily dropped it when it had served our turn. Our pulses do not beat quicker when we hear of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Of the three, we care most about Liberty, but are ready to sacrifice that in an emergency. Our legal system is built up out of precedents, not on any general principles.

There are some good qualities which I think we may justly claim. In spite of the severity of our penal code until a hundred years ago, no nation is less cruel. The sight, or even the report, of physical cruelty arouses a quite peculiar degree of moral indignation in our countrymen. It may be said that this is a recent development, and that in the eighteenth

century gentlemen still made parties to see women whipped at Newgate or Bridewell, while the lower classes enjoyed such brutal sports as bear-baiting and cock-fighting. The humanitarian movement no doubt belongs chiefly to the nineteenth century, and it may be that before this England was not much more humane than some continental countries; but it can hardly be disputed that at present we lead the world in our detestation of cruelty. This humane feeling is especially manifest in our treatment of the lower animals, to which reference has been made above. This country led the way in legislation against ill-treatment of domestic animals, and the agitation against vivisection is characteristically English. Like every other movement in England, it falls into excess and absurdity, as when sentimentalists grow indignant at corporal punishment in schools, or condemn the slaughter of animals for food. The faddist is an Anglo-Saxon product, of which neither we nor the Americans have any reason to be proud. Our humanity is shown on a wider scale in the large sums of money which are raised to relieve any special distress in every part of the world. The Americans have now passed us in pecuniary generosity, being a much richer people; but "the instinct to run and help," which a foreigner has noted as an English trait, is far less developed in any other European nation. An American, who is very critical of the British in some ways, has said that he would rather have an Englishman at hand in an emergency than a native of any other country.

Akin to humanity is an absence of vindictiveness. We have short memories when we have been wronged, and never make long plans for revenge. "The English," said Mr. Bonar Law, "are a generous race. I can say that, for I am not an Englishman. They have a magnanimity which goes always with consciousness of strength." An Englishman is simply

unable to comprehend the brooding hatred of the Irishman, which has no better ground than that Cromwell exercised the laws of war somewhat severely against the Irish rebels, and that William III won the battle of the Boyne. The detestable crime of political assassination has been conspicuously rare in England.

" The word of an Englishman " is still proverbial in some southern and eastern countries. Children are brought up to think it disgraceful to tell a lie under any circumstances, and to accuse a man of lying is one of the worst of insults. Veracity is partly an aristocratic and partly a commercial virtue, though in commerce it means fidelity to contracts rather than scrupulousness in bargaining. True Thomas in the old ballad was dismayed at the gift of " a tongue that can never lee." " My tongue is my ain," True Thomas he said, " A gudely gift ye wad gie to me! I neither dought to buy nor sell At fair or tryst where I might be." In politics, a statesman is ashamed of being caught in a direct lie; though a Foreign Minister might perhaps be excused for telling a falsehood if a true answer to a question in Parliament would be very prejudicial to the interests of the country.

The words " fair play," and " playing the game," are often in an Englishman's mouth. There are rules to be observed in all rivalry, and limits beyond which even animosity must not be carried. It is this tacit understanding, this recognition of an underlying community, with reciprocal obligations, which has made our parliamentary government possible. No disputes between Englishmen are to be pushed *à outrance* and even in hostilities with foreign nations there may be a price too high to pay for victory. The Englishman is always in difficulties when he has to deal with real Machiavellianism, or with unscrupulous fanaticism. His methods fail him, and he

usually tries feebly to compromise with those who will accept no compromise, and to reason with those who do not admit that any agreement is possible or desirable. Force, in spite of a foolish saying to the contrary, is often the only remedy, but it is a remedy which the Englishman hates to use. All his instincts are in favour of a square deal, which shall be accepted by both sides.

It is no accident that the Englishman expresses his deepest moral convictions in the terms of a game. One of our chief contributions to the pleasures of the world is that we have invented most of the good games. The love of play is a very old English characteristic. Chamberlayne's *Angliae Notitia*, published in 1660, at the end, it will be observed, of the Puritan domination, has this description; "The common people will endure long and hard labour, insomuch that after twelve hours' hard work they will go in the evening to football, stockball, cricket, prison base, wrestling, cudgel playing, or some such like vehement exercise for their recreation." It may be that these games were more played in the seventeenth century than in the eighteenth, for the vogue both of cricket and football at the present day seems to owe much to the enthusiasm with which these games are regarded at the public schools and universities. Cricket has had a much longer popularity than football, and it would not be easy to exaggerate the beneficial effect which this noble game has had upon the national character. "To play cricket" has become a synonym for honourable and straightforward team-play in any relation of life. Unlike football and racing, it has been hardly at all corrupted by betting. It was therefore with great regret that I heard from the captain of a first-class county eleven that the home side has now to be carefully watched, to see that they do not roll the ground in such a manner as to help their own team. But

unfairness in these contests is not common. We may still congratulate ourselves that the words of an American Rhodes Scholar are true. Being asked, after a year's residence at Oxford, what struck him most in English university life, he replied: "What strikes me most is that here are three thousand young men, every one of whom would rather lose a game than play it unfairly." This spirit of fair-play, which in the public schools, at any rate, is absorbed as the most inviolable of traditions, has stood our race in good stead in the professions, and especially in the administration of dependencies, where the obvious desire of the officials to deal justly and see fair-play in disputes between natives and Europeans has partly compensated for a want of sympathetic understanding, which has kept the English strangers in lands of alien culture.

All these qualities which have been enumerated as illustrating the best side of the national character may be included in the ideal type of a *gentleman*, the lay-religion of the English, and the foundation of the ethics which they really admire and try to practise. Other nations have had their ideals of character, which they suppose to belong especially to themselves. The Greek, for example, was and wished to be versatile and clear-headed. He might confess to many lies on his lips, but wished to have no "lie in his soul"; he loved beauty, but he loved wisdom or cleverness still better. The Roman had his *gravitas*, his moral seriousness, integrity, public spirit, and trustworthiness; it was a noble but harsh type, while it lasted. But no nation has so cherished a definite type of character as our countrymen have honoured the ideal of a gentleman, and striven to be worthy of it. It will be worth while to illustrate the progress of this idea by quotations, which necessarily come from Mr. Smythe Palmer's exhaustive collection. (*The Ideal of a Gentleman, A Mirror for Gentlefolks.*)

Huber, an Austrian, writing in 1843, finds that "with all his defects, foibles and faults, the old English gentleman was one of the most striking and admirable forms of civilized national education in any period of time or in any nation; and it was in fact, this race which ruled and represented England in the last period. To them she principally owes her power, her glory, and her importance; and they were essentially the production of the university education of that period." Carl Peters, an admirer but not a friend of England, also testifies to the unique advantage, for empire-building, of having a class trained in this tradition. "The calm deliberation and the daring which led to the achievements of British imperial policy must, after all, be traced to the fact that it was not, and is not, paid officials who do the work, but independent gentlemen, that distinguished class the want of which in Germany Bismarck deplored so deeply." It is probably still true that though the type is a national one, and though as fine gentlemen, in the sense in which the word expresses the national ideal of character, may be found among the working class as in any other, the tradition is best preserved and inculcated in the public schools and universities. If we should ever follow the example of the Scandinavian countries and abolish, in the name of democratic uniformity, the "gentlemen's schools," it is probable that the nation would suffer grievously by the loss of those traditions which impartial foreigners have admired so heartily.

Dean Church, in his book about Spenser, says that in the *Faery Queene* the poet tried to present the English gentleman. "It was as a whole a new character in the world. It had not really existed in the days of feudalism and chivalry, though features of it had appeared, and its descent was traced from those times; but they were too wild and coarse,

too turbulent and disorderly, for a character which, however ready for adventure and battle, looked to peace, refinement, order and law as the true conditions of its perfection. In the days of Elizabeth it was beginning to fill a large place in English life. It was formed amid the increasing cultivation of the nation, the increasing varieties of public service, the awakening responsibilities to duty and calls to self-command. Still making much of the prerogative of noble blood and family honours, it was something independent of nobility and beyond it. . . . Great birth, even great capacity, were not enough ; there must be added a new delicacy of conscience, a new appreciation of what is beautiful and worthy of honour, a new measure of the strength and nobleness of self-control, of devotion and unselfish interests. This idea of manhood, based not only on force and courage, but on truth, on refinement, on public spirit, on soberness and modesty, on consideration for others, was taking possession of the younger generation of Elizabeth's middle years. . . . It was something which on the same scale had not been yet, and which was to be the seed of something greater. . . . It was to grow into that high type of cultivated English nature, in the present and the last century, common both to its monarchical and its democratic embodiments, than which, with all its faults and defects, our western civilization has produced few things more admirable."

In the Elizabethan age and under the Stuarts, learning and intellectual accomplishments were part of this ideal, which was supposed to have been perfectly exemplified by Sir Philip Sidney. This feature, which belonged to the Renaissance tradition, hardly maintained itself in our country. "To have Land is a good first, to have Learning is the surest second," wrote Fuller, in 1652. The bucolic type of gentleman, whose only pursuit is pleasure and

whose only pleasure is pursuit, falls far short in this respect. The public school training in the nineteenth century tended to make our young aristocrats despise learning as a middle-class accomplishment, and to trust to pluck and luck to carry them over all difficulties. This was the period when it was customary to divide the community into two parts, those who had and those who had not the right to call themselves gentlemen. This prejudice was almost wholly bad in its effects, and has now become an absurdity.

The long quotation from Dean Church seemed to be justified as a perfect statement of the national ideal of character, by one who exemplified it in his own person. A better known and, as a specimen of perfect English style, equally beautiful description was given by Cardinal Newman, a description all the more remarkable because he ends by condemning the whole ideal as built on a wrong foundation, that of personal pride. He sees clearly that the character which Englishmen most admire is fundamentally different from that type of piety which is the ideal of the Roman Catholic Church. In spite of the Fifteenth Psalm, which has often been quoted as a sketch of the perfect gentleman, it is equally alien to the tastes of the ancient Hebrews, as it is also to the Greek ideal. The *Megalopsychos* of Aristotle, it has been said, resembles a nobleman in one of Disraeli's novels, but not any other kind of gentleman. But the description given by Newman is so perfect in its kind that no discussion of the subject would be complete without quoting part of it.

"It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say that he is one who never inflicts pain. . . . The true gentleman carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast—all clashing of opinion, all restraint, all suspicion

or gloom or resentment ; his great concern being to make every one at their ease and at home. . . . He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes an unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. He has too much sense to be affronted at insult, he is too busy to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. . . . He may be right or wrong in his opinions ; but he is too clear-headed to be unjust ; he is as simple as he is forcible, and as clear as he is decisive. Nowhere shall we find greater candour, conciliation, indulgence ; he throws himself into the minds of his opponents ; he accounts for their mistakes." There is more to the same effect, in the same sub-acid tone. The characteristics which he notices are too external, and not particularly English. An educated Frenchman, in fact, displays these refinements of social intercourse in a more finished perfection. But there is much in Newman's description which we may accept as a delicate portrait of the well-bred Englishman in his relations with his neighbours.

Ruskin sees that the ideal in his day had become dulled, and wishes to restore its lustre. " Gentlemen have to learn that it is no part of their duty or privilege to live on others' toil. They have to learn that there is no degradation in the hardest manual, or the humblest servile labour, while it is honest. But that there is degradation, and that deep, in extravagance, in bribery, in indolence, in pride, in taking places they are not fit for, or in coining places for which there is no need. It does not disgrace a gentleman to become an errand boy, or a day

labourer, but it disgraces him much to become a knave or a thief."

This is no new doctrine; but the era of privilege, before the Reform Bill, had in practice given rise to a double morality. There are many passages in Chesterfield's Letters, and some in Byron's, which show that it was not easy at that time for a great nobleman to be a gentleman in the higher sense. The distinction between debts of honour and debts to tradesmen, the adoption of a haughty tone towards social inferiors, and worse still, the practical denial of the truth, which belongs to the essence of gentlemanliness, that there are inalienable rights belonging to human personality as such, which must always be respected in our dealings with all persons of either sex, and of every class, show how unfavourable steep social inequalities are to the ideal of a noble character. In spite of the inevitable losses which democracy has brought with it, in the partial decay of aristocratic grace and dignity, the gain to social intercourse has far outweighed the loss. In becoming a pattern for all to copy, the character of a gentleman has been purified from many adventitious attributes which were only hindrances to its realization.

In the seventeenth century several detailed portraits of the ideal Englishman were drawn, of which *The Gentle Sinner* by Clement Ellis, written in 1661, may serve as a type. The writer finds that "Gentleman" and "Christian" are no more than the different names of the same man. . . . "The true gentleman is as much more as the false one is less, than what he seems to be. . . . He is one that is God's servant, the world's master, and his own man. His virtue is his business, his study his recreation, contentedness his rest, and happiness his reward. God is his Father, the Church his Mother, the saints his brethren, all that need him his friends. . . . He is

necessitated to take the world on the way to heaven, but he walks through it as fast as he can; and all his business by the way is to make himself and others happy."

Isaac Barrow emphasizes industry as an essential part of a gentleman's calling. The essential qualities of a gentleman are courage and courtesy; but true courage "doth prompt boldly to undertake and resolutely to dispatch great enterprises and employments of difficulty"; "and for courtesy, how otherwise can it be well displayed than in sedulous activity for the good of men?" In spite of all abuses in the age of sinecures and aristocratic privilege, the class which arrogated to itself the name of gentleman never acquiesced in the merely idle and wasteful life of the French nobles at Versailles. And in the services, the tradition established by Drake has been generally observed in time of danger. "Here is such controversy between the sailors and the gentlemen, and such stomaching between the gentlemen and the sailors that it doth even make me mad to hear it. But, my masters, I must have it left. For I must have the gentlemen to haul and draw with the marines, and the marines with the gentlemen. What! Let us show ourselves to be all of a company."

The answer of James I to his old nurse, who asked him to make her son "a gentleman," might have been given scores of times lately by the distributors of war-time honours. "I'll mak' him a *baronet* gin ye like, Luckie, but the deil himsel' couldna mak' him a gentleman."

There is, in fact, a large literature of homilies and observations on the subject of gentility. Much of it is mere ethical precept, such as might be found in almost any country and at almost any time. More still of it contains rules for social intercourse in a complex, refined, and cultivated community. All

this may be set aside as throwing but little light on the English national character. But we have to consider the comparative emphasis with which different attributes of the admired character are presented ; and if we do this, I think that something quite distinctive emerges. Parallels could no doubt be found from many other countries ; for example, nothing could be more English in sentiment than Livy's *Libertatis alienae et dignitatis suae memor* ; but the English homilies and descriptions will be found to differ markedly from Jewish ethics, from Roman Catholic ethics at all times and places, from the ethics of Renaissance Italy, from the ethics of imperialist Germany, and from the business ethics of North America. Tennyson's " Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control," to which Archbishop Temple, in a striking public-school sermon, adds self-sacrifice, are the salient features of the type. It differs from Stoicism mainly in not being a self-conscious attitude towards life—in being a character rather than a rule. The element of self-respect, perhaps even of pride, which is expressed in Livy's epigram, differentiates it sharply from the self-abasement inculcated by the moralists of the cloister ; on the other hand, the absence of self-regarding prudential calculation distinguishes it from the ethics of success, so sedulously preached in America, which appear in the most favourable form in Rudyard Kipling's fine verses ending : " You will be a man, my son." It would not be worth while, for the purposes of this volume, to analyse the type if it were not characteristic of the best Englishmen ; but there is reason to believe that it is characteristic of them.

It is necessary to remember that since the time of the Norman supremacy, when the Anglo-Saxons hardly lived up to their character of refusing ever to be slaves, our nation has not been tried in the

furnace of adversity. In the nineteenth century especially we were the objects of envy, though not of affection; and some foreign tributes, gratifying enough to our vanity, are merely the compliments which mankind everywhere pays to success. Such perhaps is Lowell's description of the "solidity" of the English genius, "an admirable foundation of national character. He is not quarrelsome, but with indefatigable durability of fight in him." (So it has been said on the Continent: "the English win one battle in every war—the last.") He speaks also of our "dogged sense of justice," and, with more doubtful accuracy, of "an equilibrium of thought which springs from clear-sighted understanding." Rudyard Kipling says that the Englishman is "like a built-up gun-barrel—all one temper though moulded of many different materials—and he has strong powers of resistance. Roman, Dane, Norman, Papist, Cromwellian, Stuart, Hanoverian, Upper Class, Middle Class, Democracy—each in turn through a thousand years experimented on him and tried to make him to their own liking. He met them each in turn with a large, silent toleration which each in turn mistook for native stupidity. He gave them each in turn a fair trial, and when he had finished with them an equally fair dismissal."

Some have found sharp contrasts in the English character. Where else, it has been asked, shall we find so much sentiment combined with so much ridicule of sentiment; so much commerce with so little of the commercial temperament; so much shop-keeping and so much idealism; such pride and such pertinacious self-disparagement; so little respect for the arts and such great names in literature; such laborious achievement and such ingrained laziness?

The average Englishman, however, does not appear very complex. Is the explanation of these

contrasts to be found in the fact that these divergent traits belong to different classes, the upper class being adventurous, active, ambitious, and apt for governing others, while the lower class is unenterprising, slothful, noisy, and emotional. It is true that without its governing class the country would never have taken a prominent part in history; but it is less easy after the Great War to believe that there are radical differences of character in the different strata of English society. The national character, as tried by that ordeal, was not quite what had been supposed—it is more reckless, humorous, and light-hearted than might have been expected from the descendants of the Puritans; but, with a few discreditable exceptions, the nation reacted as a whole to the crisis, and showed the same characteristics, including the same self-restraint and tenacity which carried it through the long wars at the beginning of the last century, when the constitution was oligarchic.

Another characteristic, which seems to belong to the nation without distinction of class, is a common-sense prudence and practicality which readily surrenders "the point of honour" to utility. A story of the Duke of Wellington during the Peninsular War is a good illustration. He had planned a combined operation on a large scale, and called on the Spanish General to secure his co-operation. That hidalgo replied that it was not consistent with his dignity to grant a request from the English commander unless he went down on his knees to ask for it. The Duke explained afterwards that he had wanted the thing done, and did not care a twopenny damn about going on his knees; "so down I plumped." No French or German General would have abased his dignity in this way, and presumably the operation would have been given up. (The story of the "Private of the Buffs," already mentioned,

shows that in other circumstances the Englishman is ready to suffer martyrdom for the honour of his country; but in that case nothing was at stake except the life of one brave man.) The same cool practicality has led the English to show almost inexhaustible patience with the treasons, insults, and outrages of the Irish, and finally to sacrifice the Irish loyalists, partly in order to get rid of a nuisance, but mainly as part of a determined policy of conciliation towards the United States. Fueter, in his *World History*, 1815-1920, notices the extreme patience and almost abject spirit of conciliation with which we have pursued this policy in face of constant affronts. This characteristic is not wholly admirable, and is regarded by some Englishmen with shame and indignation, but at least it is not consistent with the inordinate pride which some foreigners attribute to our nation.

Of recent foreign opinions, the most interesting, next to the letters of Ambassador Page during the Great War, to which I have already referred, are the *Soliloquies in England*, of Professor George Santayana. This eminent philosopher and man of letters looks at our civilization partly from an American and partly from a Spanish point of view. He sees with equal clearness the differences between England and America, and those which divide both branches of the Anglo-Saxon stock from the Latin races. A selection from his shrewd and kindly judgments may convey a just impression of how our country and its inhabitants appear to a highly cultivated stranger, who was in England, and chiefly at Oxford, during the whole period of our heavy trial.

There is, he says, a beautifully healthy England hidden from most foreigners, "the England of the countryside and of the poets, domestic, sporting, gallant, boyish, of a sure and delicate heart, which it has been mine to feel beating." England is the

home of decent happiness and a quiet pleasure in being oneself. Its manliness is self-reliant, but with a saving touch of practicality and humour. Its modesty in strength is absent from the effusive temperament of the Latin and from the doctrinaire vanity of the German. The mind of the English works at a low pressure, which shows how little they are alarmed about anything. They are sane and human, with glints of a mystical oddity. The Englishman is sensual and rational, adventurous and steady, reticent and religious; when these qualities fail him, he becomes fanatical, eccentric, and sad.

England is the paradise of individuality, eccentricity, anomalies, hobbies and humours. "Where else would a man inform you, with a sort of proud challenge, that he lived on nuts, or was in correspondence through a medium with Sir Joshua Reynolds, or had been disgustingly housed when last in prison?" What governs the Englishman is his inner atmosphere. It is never a precise reason or an outer fact that determines him to choose his work or his play or his religion, but always the weather in his soul. This is a mass of dumb instincts and allegiances, the love of a certain quality of life. His adventures change him so little that he is not afraid of them. He carries his English weather in his heart wherever he goes.

The secret of English mastery is self-mastery. In what lies beyond his citadel he takes but a languid interest. He seldom allows his wanderings to unhinge his home loyalties or ruffle his self-possession. As to speculative truth, he instinctively halts short of it; in the moral world he does not believe in courage. "What those who dislike him call his hypocrisy is but timeliness in his instincts and a certain modesty on their part in not intruding upon one another."

The Englishman is not inquisitive, and resents inquisitiveness in others. He is quite willing not to be able to look out of his windows upon the street, if only he can prevent other people from looking in. The eyes of men disquiet him, and strangers have to convince him tactfully that he would be safe in making friends with them. But repression of sympathy sometimes kills it; the elderly Englishman is sometimes as vacuous as in earlier life he pretended to be.

The author makes certain observations on the Englishman's religion, which will not be palatable to all, though broadly they are true. The Englishman, he says, living in and by his inner man, can never be really a Catholic. "If he likes to call himself so, it is a fad like a thousand others, to which his inner man, so seriously playful, is prone to lend itself. He may go over to Rome on a spiritual tour, as he might abscond for a year and live in Japan with a Japanese wife; but if he becomes a Catholic at heart, he is no longer the man he was. Words cannot measure the chasm which must henceforth separate him from everything at home. For an Englishman, with freedom and reserve and experiment in his blood, to go over to Rome is an essential suicide; the inner man must succumb first. Such an Englishman might become a saint, but only by becoming a foreigner."

It will be answered that hundreds of good Englishmen become Catholics, without including those who have been brought up in the Roman obedience. It would, indeed, be absurd to suppose that all English people have the qualities which observers have found in the race. In every large denomination there are natural Catholics and natural Protestants. But it is impossible to converse long with a Catholic without being conscious of an unsurmountable barrier; and if we consider what that barrier is, we find that we

cannot confidently appeal to those instincts and moral traditions which are the common heritage of all English people. Santayana's words, though somewhat exaggerated, express a real truth.

This writer in another place raises a very serious question—whether the working-men of the towns any longer have the English character. "Their forced unanimity in action and passion is like that of the ages of faith; its inspiration comes from a few apostles, perhaps foreign Jews, men who in the beginning had visions of some millennium; cohesion is maintained afterwards by preaching, by custom, by persecution, and by murder." "It is astonishing," he says, "with what docility masses of Englishmen, supposed to be jealous of their personal liberty, will obey a revolutionary junta which taxes and commands them, and decrees when they shall starve and when they shall fight." In truth this is a phenomenon of very great and sinister import, for there has been nothing like it hitherto in English history. It has not been possible to induce any other class in the community to submit to this kind of discipline in defence of its own interests. It is un-English; more un-English than the rather superficial Catholic revival. One thing is certain. Organization of this uncompromising and militant type is fundamentally incompatible with parliamentary government, with democracy, and with civil liberty. Just because of its ruthless efficiency, it must destroy our institutions, which are adapted only to a nation which acknowledges a deep-lying unity and identity of interests beneath all political differences. Military discipline, whether it ends in the victory of the class which first resorts to it, or of a rival organization framed to resist it, can end only in the death of freedom, and in the establishment of a government resting on the power of the sword.

Another notable criticism of the national character

is that of Count Hermann Keyserling, a Russo-German nobleman from the Baltic provinces. It must be remembered that he saw chiefly the English in India, the military and official caste; but his estimate will probably be recognized as acute and partially true of the nation as a whole, except the new type which has been generated within the last century in our great industrial centres.

This travelling philosopher, as he calls himself, says: "Whenever I meet one of this people, I am shocked by the contrast between the dearth of their talents and the limitation of their horizon, and the recognition which every one of them exacts from me, as from everyone else. Even the more eminent Englishmen can hardly be taken seriously as intellectuals. They are like animals furnished with a number of unerring instincts, but otherwise blind and incapable. They all think, feel and act alike; there are no surprises in the inner lives of any one of them." (This reveals the philosopher's limitations. He has not realized the social drill which causes an English gentleman to hide his emotions; he naturally found no surprises in an inner life which he was not allowed for an instant to penetrate.) "They represent, as they are, the perfect realization of their possibilities; they are completely what they might have been. This explains their power of convincing others, and their superiority over the other peoples of Europe, which at present cannot reasonably be contested." He adds, quite truly, that the English and the Austrian aristocrat fraternize at once; both are perfect in their way, and in the same way.

"Thanks to centuries of physical culture, the British organism has developed into a world of its own so much that external circumstances affect it slowly, if at all. For this reason, the Englishman can live in the tropics like an Englishman; that

is to say, in the most unhealthy manner that can be imagined."

"One is often surprised at the many-sidedness of English aristocrats, who to-day are journalists, to-morrow viceroys, the day after Ministers of the Board of Trade, and, if they have time, write good books on history or philology." (Such a career hardly suggests a conspicuous "dearth of talent.") The Englishman has himself more in hand than any other European. In spite of the low level of his culture, he is a thoroughly integral unity, firmly anchored. He owes this to Puritanism, a Yoga or culture of concentration no less intensive than that of India.

These are obviously criticisms of a single class, which, according to the writer, has achieved something like perfection in realizing a very limited ideal. That Englishmen are all alike is a superficial judgment; we are so individualistic that a Frenchman has said that the best hand-book and guide to the English character is *Robinson Crusoe*. Sir Walter Raleigh (in his *England and the War*) adds Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Wordsworth's *Prelude*. "In England every man claims the right to go to heaven his own way."

Raleigh notes that the English in the Great War fought gaily, like cavaliers, not dourly, like Puritans. The Americans, I believe, still fight like Puritans; their glorious "Battle Hymn of the Republic" would have delighted the heart of Oliver Cromwell. This difference may be important. So much of the strength of our nation has been inspired by Puritanism, and bound up with it, that the disappearance of this virile and stern element in the national character would be a disquieting symptom. But probably there is a periodical ebb and flow in these matters; license follows restraint, and restraint license.

Intelligent French observers, like Boutmy and Chevrillon, have received, on the whole, a very similar impression to those already given. Boutmy, writing about 1900, is still able to speak of the Englishman as an admirable working machine, full of energy and activity ; but he notices that a change is beginning, and that the people, who formerly rejected State aid as an indignity, are now beginning to welcome it. He, like other foreign visitors, is struck by the strong inner life of the English, and finds it reflected in the imaginative literature of the nation. There is no light and smiling dilettantism in the English character. " Its joys are tragic and profound, its sufferings deep-rooted and violent." There is a lack of easy receptivity ; the imagination is forced back on itself. British humour is sometimes an exquisite fantasy, sometimes tedious buffoonery. There is in English a rich poetry of the soul ; but it is the work of a few persons. The masses, however, have strong will-power. He quotes from *Tom Brown's Schooldays,* " the consciousness of silent endurance, of standing out against something and not giving in," and the last lines of Tennyson's *Ulysses*. Characteristic, too, is Burke's exclamation : " I hate the very sound of abstractions." The Englishman's ideals are within his reach ; he is seldom a pantheist, a mystic, or a sceptic. His belief in self-government and self-discipline of the will makes him a Protestant rather than a Catholic in religion. He is more of a poet and less of an artist than the Latin. In fiction, his favourite theme is the concentrated pathos of some deep moral struggle. But the English novel is a picture of life in all its bearings, variegated and often chaotic, like Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. Shakespeare, too, avoids the French classical mode of character-types ; he gives us real life in all its disorderly exuberance. The book closes with fears for the future. The English

character, "optimistic, credulous, busy and meddlesome," is very ill-protected against the dangers of State socialism.

These different estimates, collected from various quarters, show what the world has decided to think and say about the islanders who since the sixteenth century have taken a great and increasingly important part in the history of civilization. It has been our lot to be more respected than loved, and the reluctant admiration which our prosperity has extorted has been mixed with a sort of surprise that we have maintained our position so long. The Englishman does not invite sympathy; he is not incommoded by the coldness of strangers, which he much prefers to anything like effusiveness. He has no wish to intrude on his neighbour's privacy, and jealously guards his own. We cannot be surprised if this is sometimes put down to arrogance or haughty indifference; and though we cannot plead guilty to these faults, we have to confess to a large share of national pride, such as Queen Elizabeth, then old and feeble, expressed when Denmark offered to mediate between England and Spain: "I would have the King of Denmark, and all princes, Christian and heathen, to know, that England hath no need to crave peace; nor myself endured one hour's fear since I attained the crown thereof, being guarded with so valiant and faithful subjects."

To show how the national character has influenced the main departments of spiritual and intellectual life would require a treatment far beyond the scope of this book. The same difficulty will recur in other parts of a subject which is much too comprehensive for a single volume. But something, I think, must be added to complete the sketch of our countrymen which I have attempted to give in this chapter, and a few words on the characteristics of religion in

England, as exhibited in the history of the National Church, may not be out of place.

Although England before the Reformation was culturally an integral part of the civilized West, our insular position, our distance from Rome, and the character of our people encouraged many assertions of independence on the part of the National Church, long before the final breach in the sixteenth century. In the reign of Edward I the Pope, supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury, claimed that the clergy should be exempt from the King's taxes, and those who paid were excommunicated. The King outlawed the Archbishop and his supporters, seized their lands, and obliged the clergy to pay their share to the national exchequer. The standing quarrel with the Papacy was aggravated while the Popes lived at Avignon, and actively supported France against England, and also by the shameless extortions connected with the sale of ecclesiastical offices. The Kings began to confiscate monastic lands on a large scale; Winchester, Eton, and some colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, were endowed in this way. A new imperialistic theory was advocated, by which the temporal sovereign was supreme over the spiritual power; this theory was acted upon later, under the Tudors. Wyclif preached bolder doctrines. The temporal power might take away Church property if it was no longer usefully employed; excommunication does no harm to a man who does not deserve to be excommunicated. The Great Schism, which broke out at this time and lasted for two generations, encouraged Wyclif to ask why, if there were two Popes, there should be a Pope at all. Wyclif was condemned, and the Schism was terminated, but the scandals and extortions of the Papacy became worse than ever. The breach with Rome under Henry VIII was popular, and it was truly said at the time that if the King had wished to go

back, he would have found it almost impossible to do so.

In spite of the burnings under Mary, religious persecution in England was mild as compared with the continental nations. Cruelty was even then odious to the conscience of Englishmen. In Scotland, for example, torture was far more common, and was continued later, than in the southern part of the island, and England saw none of the holocausts of victims who died for their faith in France and the Low Countries.

The multiplications of quaint religious sects in England must be regarded as characteristic, since on the Continent Protestantism was fairly successful in avoiding these disruptions. The Englishman, as has been already said, likes to find his own way to heaven, and has no scruple in leaving the beaten track with a few friends to accompany him. Freak-religions have been more bizarre in the United States; but such books as Sir Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son* show what strange vagaries of belief are or were possible even to men of high intellectual distinction. Faddism of every kind is a national defect; the English mind is singularly ill-protected against it. The Church of England, which cannot bring to bear the coercive and terrorist methods of the Roman Church, loses, and generally loses permanently, any body of recalcitrants against her authority. The Methodist secession was unnecessary; but having taken place, it cannot be undone.

The spirit of compromise has guided the Church of England at all times. It has aimed at being the nation on its spiritual side, and has not thought it necessary to be more logical or consistent than the people as a whole. For this reason, it has been abused and valued like any other English institution. It has been, on the whole, Conservative or at least anti-revolutionary; in time of national danger it is

always vehemently patriotic; but it allows the utmost latitude of divergence in all questions upon which good citizens are divided. It has kept the *via media* between "the meretricious gaudiness of the Church of Rome, and the squalid sluttery of fanatical conventicles," to quote a seventeenth century divine. It has tended to produce good men and women rather than saints. Professional holiness has not been held in much esteem among us, and the saintly type is not altogether agreeable to our taste.

Such being the character of the established Church, there has seldom been any strong anti-clerical feeling such as exists on the Continent. There is no Church party in politics, and no anti-Church party. The interests of the Church are consciously bound up with the welfare of the people of England; but its critics complain of inertia and want of enthusiasm for any reform. The present condition and future prospects of organized religion in England will be touched upon, though very briefly, in a later chapter.

England has been singularly rich in religious or semi-religious poetry. The tradition has been that poetry should exercise a moral influence; and in the Elizabethan age it was almost the mode for poets like Spenser and Sidney to express penitence for the "lewd lays" (in reality quite innocuous love poetry) which they had written before they became Platonic idealists. Three at least of the greatest names in English poetry, Spenser, Milton and Wordsworth, have claimed to be and are religious teachers. Much of our prose has also been characterized by a prophetic spirit of moral earnestness, with denunciation of social evils. The England of the last century, which in action avoided revolutionary violence, in its literature often copied the pessimism and the menaces of the Jewish prophets. It is quite in accordance with the anti-professional prejudices of the English people that for the last hundred

years our most influential religious teachers have been laymen.

Boutmy's statement that the English temper is alien to mysticism needs some qualification. We have produced no Suso or John of the Cross; but that type of mysticism which is related on one side to the philosophy of Plato and on the other to the love of nature has been well represented among us. There was a school of English mystics in the late middle ages, of whom Julian of Norwich is the most attractive. Later, there are the poets George Herbert, Vaughan, Traherne, Quarles, and Crashaw; the Cambridge Platonists, and the devotional works of William Law in the unmystical eighteenth century. All these belong to the mystical type of religious faith, which is indeed very congenial to the inwardness and individualism of English piety. The tradition has been well maintained till our own day, especially in our great poets.

The freedom of our social life from sacerdotal influences has kept England relatively immune from superstition. The curious belief that epilepsy can be cured by the royal touch, was fostered by the Stuarts for political reasons, and died a natural death when that dynasty was expelled. Lecky and other writers have told the shameful story of trials and executions for witchcraft, a form of superstition which was at first rather encouraged than checked by the Reformation. Beliefs of this kind are not quite extinct in remote country districts, but are now interesting only as survivals. The new working-class population of the large towns is not superstitious; the extreme materialism of their outlook has had at least this advantage. Not much importance need be attached to the fashionable recrudescence of necromancy among men and women of the richer class. It has been made easier by the decay of militant rationalism since the beginning of the

century, and by the spread of anti-rationalistic philosophies; but the main cause has been the pathetic desire to establish communications with beloved husbands, sons, and brothers who gave their lives for the country in the Great War. The phenomenon, nevertheless, has its importance in reminding us that the improvement in education has not been accompanied by any intrinsic advance in the intelligence of the people.

When we turn from religion to philosophy, we find that a few English names, such as Hobbes, Hume, and Berkeley, are prominent in continental histories of metaphysics, and that the usual verdict is that the English are thorough-going empiricists. The national character of English philosophy is not apparent till the Renaissance, when Bacon and, after him, Hobbes were both pioneers. The course of English philosophy after Hobbes may be represented as a reaction against Descartes, in which the antagonism between the English and French genius is very apparent. Descartes, with his clear-cut French intellect, had so separated the sphere of extension from the sphere of thought, that they could not be brought together, and Hegel's criticism that he had cut the world in two with a hatchet was justified. Nature seemed to be divorced from man, and man from nature; the lower animals, he even taught, were mere automata. He put his faith in "reason," which may be recognized by the clearness and distinctness of its ideas. This criterion led to an undue simplification, which precluded the study of anything so complex as human psychology. Under the influence of Cartesian methods, congenial at all times to the French temperament, we find, from Racine to Victor Hugo, a literature in which men appear as character-types, walking. It is admirably lucid, while the real springs of action are always foggy and mysterious. The genius of Shakespeare

had already held up the mirror to life in a very different fashion; and from the time of Addison a new dignity began to be given to the *imagination*, as the revealer of the deep things of God and of nature. This reverence for the imagination opens a door into those chambers of experience which to rationalism are an illusion or a scandal—to the sphere of half-lights, "worlds not realized" but discerned in symbol and shadow; so that to Wordsworth the imagination is "reason in her most exalted mood." Some may fancifully suggest that a philosophy of dim lights and blurred outlines was likely to arise in such a climate as ours.

German histories of philosophy give respectful attention to British philosophy before Kant, to Locke, Berkeley, Shaftesbury, and Hume; they convey the impression that in the nineteenth century its influence on European thought was not great. It is true that in the brilliant period of German speculation England, which after the Napoleonic War was for a time more isolated from the main currents of continental thought than at any other period since the Renaissance, did not contribute much to the grand debate. It was only with the advent of our great natural philosophers of the school of Darwin, that our country again took a foremost place. The great German system-makers became known to English thinkers rather late; it was even said that German philosophies go to Oxford when they die. But philosophies seldom die, though they often hibernate; and the English Kantians and Hegelians have not been mere disciples. They have worked over the whole field again, and have perhaps, in the last fifty years, produced more fruitful results than the epigoni of the great thinkers in Germany. F. H. Bradley may in the future be reckoned as the most powerful metaphysician of his generation. The idealistic, religious, and practical side of philo-

sophical speculation has always attracted our countrymen, many of whom are natural Platonists. A recent writer, J. T. Merz, has said that in English philosophy there is an individual character which entitles it to rank as one of the most important phases in the history of human thought.

The "individual character" is well marked in English theology, philosophy, and science alike. It is one of the resemblances between England and Greece that our most influential thinkers and discoverers have rarely been professionals. We are a nation of amateurs, in peace and war, when compared with the Germans. There are advantages and disadvantages on both sides. Our great men have had wider interests and more knowledge of the world than can be often found in a university professor. They have not (Herbert Spencer is an exception) been systematizers; many of them have been content to write from an individual point of view. But they have had imagination, which even in pure science (Clark Maxwell is said to have been a salient example) often reveals in flashes truths which the plodding inductive method might have failed to reach. It remains to be seen whether the social changes now in progress will give scope in the future for thinkers and researchers with independent means, such as Mill, Darwin and Galton, who have contributed so largely to the fame of their country in the last three generations.

In the natural sciences, England may claim the first place among the nations, and it is pleasant to observe that though in the other departments of intellectual activity there has been and is a dearth of very outstanding ability since the death of the great Victorians, there is no diminution in the output of first-rate work in physics and biology. Two features in English science may be mentioned as characteristic. One is the important part, already mentioned, taken by amateurs, such as Boyle,

Napier, Lord Worcester, Darwin and Galton. The other is the practical application of new discoveries. "The seventeenth century," says Mr. Marvin, "was full of new science and fashionable inventors. Napier, the father of logarithms, invented a war machine much like an infant tank. Kings and nobles loved to dabble in laboratories and make new scientific toys. The Marquis of Worcester, a rather older contemporary of Newton, invented a sort of steam-engine a hundred years before Watt. It is described in his Century of the Names and Scantlings of such Inventions as at present I can call to mind to have tried and perfected." At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, applied science was very busy, and its results were very fruitful. But there have been other English discoveries which, partly because they were the invention of individual amateurs working alone, were not at first recognized as important; in some instances they have been appropriated and developed by other nations.

The achievement of England in Art has been somewhat under-estimated abroad, except in America, where portraits by Reynolds, Romney and Raeburn, and landscapes by Gainsborough and Constable, now fetch enormous prices. The peaceful beauty of an English landscape, and the ever-changing moods and colours of our native seas, have been worthily reproduced on canvas. Nor can any contemporary artist abroad challenge, on their own field, the spiritual beauty of Watts and Burne Jones. Sargent, one of the greatest men of the twentieth century, we can hardly claim as our own; and it must be admitted that the annual crop of British paintings is at present painfully poor in quality. We have not entirely escaped the wave of pure anarchism in art which covers the walls of continental galleries with abominations which suggest

the work of a very unpleasant child. Architecture is beginning a very interesting renaissance in America, and is seething with new life in Sweden. Hitherto, our efforts in this branch seldom show much inspiration, and in sculpture we are surpassed by more than one or two Continental nations.

The soul of England is reflected in our literature as much as in our history. We have borrowed styles and modes of writing as freely as the words which make up our language. Some of our greatest have borrowed most. But the national temper and spirit breathe from our literature as a whole, and by common consent some of our poets and prose writers have interpreted us to ourselves and to foreign nations with supreme fidelity.

The moral and didactic tone which is so characteristic of English literature is already prominent in the fourteenth century poems of Langland, the author of *Piers Plowman*. "Alone among the principal writers of his age," says Sir Edmund Gosse, "he looks away from Europe, continues the old Teutonic tradition, and is satisfied with an inspiration that is purely English." His *Vision* is full of vivid descriptions of the life of the poor, and so may be regarded as the pioneer of the literature of discontent. But it is the moral, not the economic, condition of England which rouses his indignation. Piers Plowman is Christ in disguise, travailing for the souls of men and women. It was an age of social and intellectual upheaval, and also of rising national consciousness, which found expression in the magnificent pictures of social life which we admire in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. This matchless panorama of medieval life is English in its abounding humour and jollity, its mixture of grave and gay, of coarseness and deep piety. His outlook is not gloomy, like that of Langland. Fun and high spirits prevail over the darker aspects of

life, to which he is by no means blind. He was the greatest writer of his time in Europe, and his genius received immediate recognition.

At the same time, our ballad-literature, describing the turbulent feuds of the northern Border, and the romantic life of the chivalrous outlaws of Sherwood Forest, is equally characteristic of medieval England. And in the fifteenth century Sir Thomas Malory immortalized our old national epic, and quickened in his readers the love of knightly honour, prowess, and adventure which went to form one side at least of the ideal of the English gentleman. Chivalry was already far on the wane when he wrote; but it is the autumnal hues of an institution which usually inspire the poetic chronicler.

We shall not recognize Shakespeare as the quintessential Englishman until we have learned to keep our encomiums of him "on this side idolatry." He had to wait for the Romantics before he fully came into his own; they worshipped him, it must in time be owned, with too little discrimination. Perhaps he is, as we are accustomed to say, the greatest name in all literature; but we cannot surrender to mankind the most typical of English dramatists. He has also been half buried under a talmud of commentary, over which no one would have laughed so heartily as himself.

The spirit of adventure and discovery also left its mark upon all the literature of the English Renaissance. It can be traced easily in Spenser, who reminds his readers "daily how, through hardy enterprise many great regions are discovered," in Milton, who is fond of allusions to the sea, in Shakespeare and still more in Marlowe, as well as in the writings of the voyagers themselves, Raleigh, Hakluyt, and Purchas. Even Hobbes and Locke are affected by it, and its influence lived on in *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Ancient Mariner*.

In Samuel Johnson, Englishmen love and honour a perfect representative of the national character, with its sturdy independence, high-minded rectitude, and robust common sense. Equally typical, in their different ways, are Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning; we cannot imagine any of the three a Frenchman or a German. Elie Halévy says that Wordsworth is, or is to be, the true national poet of England.

"The type of novel invented in England about 1740–1750," says Sir Edmund Gosse, "continued for sixty or seventy years to be the only model for Continental fiction." Richardson especially was admired all over Europe in a way which now seems to us excessive, and Sterne and Fielding were almost equally well-known. Fielding's imitators kept to the main path of English fiction, which in the nineteenth century was trodden by Thackeray and Dickens. When to these great names we add the still greater name of Walter Scott, beloved all over Europe, we may justly claim that in romance England bears the palm even in competition with France. The typical English novel is less carefully constructed, less artistically arranged, more discursive than the French; it is a picture of life, often with reflections, grave or gay, setting out the author's views on moral or social questions. There is nothing quite like the English novel in any other literature. On the Continent fiction is often morbid or prurient; it has phases of stark realism, with minute descriptions of some unfamiliar mode of life; it is comparatively rare to find the clean wholesomeness of Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens, and of a number of lesser but still admirable writers, such as Jane Austen, Trollope, and Mrs. Gaskell. The extreme reticence of Victorian fiction was, in part, a convention; the reverence shown to women and children, to pure love and pure marriage, was

no convention, but conviction based on happy experiences.

Lastly, the English lyric is inferior to none, from the Elizabethan age, from which some exquisite pieces survive even without the names of the writers, through Shelley to Tennyson. If we had to name the three most consummate artists in language who have shown what beauty our tongue is capable of, they would perhaps be Milton, Shelley, and Tennyson.

These few short paragraphs may serve to remind us of the glorious heritage that we have in our literature. It may be hoped that in the future our scandalous neglect of it in education may be remedied. Much, though not enough, has already been done in this direction.

In conclusion, it may be asked whether there are signs that the old national character is changing. It has changed in the same way as the character of an individual changes when he suddenly finds that great success is within his reach, and when again he suspects that his opportunity of doing something noteworthy may be coming to an end. There was a sudden change, in temper rather than character, in the reign of Elizabeth. "At her accession," says Sir John Seeley, "the English temperament was troubled and gloomy. People had grown accustomed to the sight of bishops at the stake and queens at the block. Later they had to accustom themselves to the danger of foreign wars and Spanish Armadas. During Elizabeth's reign this national melancholy went on healing itself. It gave place to a sanguine self-confidence, a robust and boisterous national pride, which first led to a loving study of English history and antiquities, and then broke out in a national poetry, which in Shakespeare overflows with jubilant patriotism. The Scotsman, Drummond, a little later finds that

the English school of literature errs principally by its extravagantly national character, and Sully passes the same judgment upon English statesmenship."

The nation experienced another great deliverance as the result of the Napoleonic wars, and once more, as in the sixteenth century, it entered on a phase of confident expansion and jubilant self-confidence. National pride draped itself in soberer colours than in the picturesque age of the Tudors, but its sweep was far wider and its ambitions more extravagant. The "Expansion of England" between Waterloo and the Great War is, as we shall see in another chapter, one of the great facts of history. In such circumstances, even the naturally indolent may become laborious, and even the naturally idealistic may be engrossed in material prosperity.

There has not been, and there can hardly be, any such springing optimism as the result of our recent deliverance from the German peril. For, as will be argued later, the period of European expansion has come to an end, and the country is faced with the grave problem of adapting itself to stationary or even retrograde conditions. So far as our culture is traditional, it is in danger from the vast aggregation of people who have no traditions, uprooted from the soil, and crowded together under conditions which create an angry and rebellious class-consciousness, without the "organic filaments" which bind together all the members of a healthy society. In all countries alike, which have developed industrialism on a large scale, civilization is confronted with a new and dangerous type, whose character is still imperfectly known. How far this part of the population can be leavened by what is most wholesome in the national tradition, is a problem of the future; no confident answer can be given to it. It may turn out that as this new population was

created by the industrial revolution, so it will decay with the conditions which brought it into existence. Or it may be possible to diminish its present isolation, and to enlarge its outlook by education. It would be faint-hearted to despair of reuniting the nation, and imbuing it with the spirit which has carried England through so many other troubles and difficulties.

I will conclude this chapter with another quotation from George Santayana, which every Englishman will receive with pleasure and gratitude. "Never since the heroic days of Greece has the world had such a sweet, just, boyish master. It will be a black day for the human race when scientific blackguards, conspirators, churls, and fanatics manage to supplant him."

# CHAPTER III

## EMPIRE

History, says Sir John Seeley, should not only gratify the reader's curiosity about the past, but modify his view of the present and his forecast of the future. This is the object of whatever historical details are admitted into this volume. The scope of the book includes the past, for the roots of the England that we know strike deep into the soil of antiquity; but only the living past, which, though in one sense it is over and done with, in another is still in the making, being an integral part of that national inheritance which is a unitary whole, with a destiny which is still ours to make or to mar.

The Commonwealth of self-governing societies, which we still call by the honoured name of the British Empire, has many claims to our admiration and loyalty. Of these not the least is that it is one of the two grandly successful political experiments of modern times. The other is the federal constitution of the United States of America. The political philosopher can find nothing of equal importance for his eye to rest upon since the Mediterranean Empire of the Roman Cæsars; and that great empire, though it lasted longer than either the British Empire or the North American Republic has lasted at present, failed in the end to resist the tendencies to disintegration which were inherent in it from the first. For us, too, there are "Problems of Greater Britain" which await solution. Their challenge is not entirely what Sir Charles Dilke anticipated near the end of Queen Victoria's reign. For example, he was altogether blind to the German danger which loomed very large twelve years ago. But the main problem is interior to the Empire. It has yet to be proved whether we can hold together a loosely-bound confederacy, scattered over the

whole world, and containing large alien elements in its population. The strain of the Great War was borne magnificently, and the result vindicated the wisdom of our policy in giving our Colonies complete internal freedom. There do not seem at present to be any forces tending directly to disruption, though the Americans, ignorant, it would seem, of Canadian feeling, sometimes use arrogant language about "taking over" that half of North America which is under our flag. The future of India is more doubtful, and might be in great peril if a rising occurred while a doctrinaire Socialist government was in power. But Indian problems are dealt with in another volume of this series.

The expansion of England, our overseas commerce, and our industrial supremacy, which were all closely connected, were not the result of the blood of the Vikings, nor due to any remarkable aptitude either for seafaring or for money-making in our people. In the middle ages our fleet was feeble and our foreign trade very small. The Englishman is neither industrious nor thrifty; he is disposed to be lazy, open-handed, and fond of good living. The expansion of England began with the opening of the Atlantic trade-routes. We owe our position as a Great Power to our geographical situation, and to our comparative freedom from the continental entanglements which handicapped Spain, Holland, and France. Our coal and iron enabled us to take the fullest advantage of the good fortune which was thus offered to us.

It may seem unscientific to attribute much importance to sheer luck; but in the time of dynastic policies and personal rule the fate of whole nations frequently hung upon the thread of a single life, or upon the arbitrary decisions of one individual. In the sixteenth century the course of English history was profoundly affected by the early death

of Queen Mary, and her childlessness ; by the death of Francis II of France without children by Mary Stuart ; and by the patriotic determination of Elizabeth to remain unmarried, at a time when royal marriages were part of the established system of foreign politics in Europe, and great nations were handed over as heritable properties belonging to bride or bridegroom. The danger that England might become an appanage of a continental power was not imaginary in the sixteenth century. We were in peril both from Spain and France.

No deep-laid schemes of founding an empire were ever made in this country. The flag has usually followed trade, not trade the flag. It is a picturesque exaggeration to say, with Seeley, that we conquered half the world in a fit of absence of mind, for several annexations were made deliberately, to keep out our rivals ; but our colonial history does not show the steady land-hunger which in the nineteenth century was continually extending the boundaries of the Russian Empire.

When Elizabeth began to reign, much water had flowed under the bridge since the Council of Constance in 1414, when, as Gibbon tells us, France disputed the title of England to a voice in the affairs of Europe, contending that England was one of the lesser kingdoms, like Denmark and Portugal. The English representatives established their claim to join the "Big Four"—Italy, Germany, France and Spain. The victories of Henry V probably carried more weight than their audacious statement that England alone could boast of 52,000 parish churches. Yet England under Elizabeth, now incontestably a great power, had no colonies, unless we include Newfoundland, which was annexed, on paper, in 1583.

The discovery of America, and the arrival every year of ships loaded with bullion from the New

World, founded the fortunes of great bankers, on a scale hitherto unthought of. An American writer estimates the wealth of the Peruzzi, in 1300, at only 800,000 dollars, of the Medici, in 1440, at seven-and-a-half millions, of the Fuggers, in 1546, at forty millions. The Governments began to take a hand in promoting commercial enterprise, especially in founding Chartered Companies, a combination of public and private speculation. All the chief nations had their Chartered Companies. In England the Merchant Adventurers gained their Charter in 1564, the Muscovy Company in 1566, the Fellowship of Eastland Merchants, to trade with countries east of the Sound, in 1579. In 1577 the Company of Cathay was formed to find the North-West Passage. In 1581 the Levant or Turkey Company was commissioned to compete with the Venetian argosies. In 1588 the African Company was incorporated. The India Company received a Charter in 1600.

In 1579 Drake, who was circumnavigating the globe, was the first to claim British sovereignty in the New World. He landed in California, and proposed to call the country Nova Albion. When he sailed away, he " set up a monument of our being there ; as also of Her Majesty's right and title to the name, namely, a plate nailed upon a fair great post, whereupon was engraven Her Majesty's name, the day and year of our arrival there, with the free giving up of the province and people into Her Majesty's hand." Four years later Humphrey Gilbert took possession of Newfoundland in the same formal and ineffective way. A real settlement on this island was made in 1610. Raleigh, Gilbert's brother, sent ships to Virginia in 1584, and in the next year colonists under Sir Richard Grenville were sent out, but failed, and were brought home by Drake. These first experiments had not been very

encouraging, but the imagination of the people was fired by the romance of exploration and colonizing, and the Elizabethan poets are fond of dwelling on the wonders of the New World. Sir Charles Lucas quotes Michael Drayton's eulogy of the queen :—

> "Who sent her navies hence
> Unto the either Inde and to the shore so green
> Virginia that we call of her, a virgin queen."

and Marlowe's lines :—

> "See what a world of ground
> Lies westward from the midst of Cancer's line
> Unto the rising of this earthly globe,
> Whereas the sun declining from our sight
> Begins the day with our Antipodes."

Shakespeare's Caliban comes from the new travellers' tales. He makes Falstaff say : "She's a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty ; they shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both." In describing these early expeditions, Sir Charles Lucas asks : "What good has the Empire been to Englishmen ? Why did England want an Empire ? Find the answer in the annals of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, before there was any British Empire at all. Because the English sucked in the instinct of maritime enterprise with their mother's milk, because they identified such enterprise—and rightly—with freedom and national life, because they were human and found that it paid, because they were growing and meant to grow, because they were English and loved to have it so."

In the seventeenth century, discovery and piracy made way for the more prosaic business of colonization. The New England colonies were the result and the embodiment of Puritanism. Independency, especially, determined the political form of these settlements. Many of the emigrants, like the Pilgrim Fathers, who had fled to Holland in 1608,

and landed at Cape Cod in 1620, had left their country to escape molestation for their religious principles. In 1629 the Company of Massachusetts Bay obtained its Charter. New Haven, Maine, and New Hampshire soon followed. Boston was founded in 1630, Philadelphia, the capital of the Quaker State of Pennsylvania, in 1683. New Amsterdam, henceforth to be called New York, was taken from the Dutch in 1664.

In 1700 the British settlements extended from St. Croix to the Savannah, about a thousand miles from north to south. Inland they had not penetrated more than a hundred miles at the widest part. Rhode Island and Connecticut were Chartered Colonies governing themselves. Maryland and Pennsylvania were under Proprietors recognized by the Crown. The remaining eight colonies were governed by nominees of the Crown. The contrast between the north, partly agricultural and partly industrial, and the South, where farms and plantations were worked by slave labour, had already begun. At the accession of George I the population of New England was a little under 100,000. There is no evidence for the numbers of the middle and southern colonies at this time, but it is certain that during the eighteenth century numerous emigrants from other European nations came to the middle colonies and to the Carolinas.

In Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas the Church of England was established ; in New England Congregationalism was in power, and for a time ruled with a rod of iron. In Rhode Island the Baptists were the majority. For one reason or another, the Anglican Church never won the hearts of the people, and in some of the colonies it remained very weak.

The Hudson Bay Company came into existence in 1670. Bermuda, an uninhabited island, was colonized after the wreck of the *Seaventure* on its

coast in 1609. Bermuda colonized the Bahamas in 1647. Barbados, after a formal annexation in 1605, was settled in 1625. This healthy and fertile island seems to have been previously unpeopled. Jamaica, a still greater prize, was taken from the Spaniards by an expedition sent out by Cromwell. These islands were long regarded as the most important part of the British Empire, owing to the great profits from the cultivation of sugar by slave labour. Georgia was added to the twelve colonies already in existence, in 1732.

The greater part of this American Empire was, as we all know, permanently lost in the reign of George III. There has been a great deal of discussion as to how and why we lost this our first Empire, and it is not a dead issue ; it is important that we should know the truth. And in my opinion no historical event has ever been so grotesquely and perversely distorted. Not only is every youthful American brought up on a partisan account of what occurred,[1] but the majority of English histories are not much better. It is no doubt very important that we should use friendly language about the United States, but not at the cost of falsifying history and traducing our own ancestors. I shall therefore give a short but, I believe, a truthful description of this unhappy incident in our history.

The colonies already enjoyed a large measure of independence. Massachusetts elected its own governors ; it even went to war with France without consulting the Home Government. When Connecticut set up as a separate colony, no leave was asked from England. New Hampshire and Maine

[1] It is right to say that there has recently been a great change for the better in American historical works about the War of Independence. That nation is now too great to wish to misrepresent facts a hundred and fifty years old.

were absorbed by Massachusetts without permission. In 1646 Winthrop declared that "by our charter we have absolute power of government, for thereby we have power to make laws, to erect all sorts of magistracy, to correct, punish, pardon, govern and rule the people absolutely. The laws of the Parliament of England reach no further than the shores of England." Even in Barbados, in 1653, there was a design "to make this place a Free State, and not to run any fortune with England either in peace or war."—(*Egerton.*)

It is commonly said that restrictions on trade, imposed in the interest of the mother country, crippled the industries of the colonies. Such restrictions were regarded as a matter of course in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and though they constituted a grievance, it is not possible to prove that they did the colonists much harm. By an act passed in 1660, the chief products of the colonies could be landed only at British ports. European goods might not be imported into the colonies except in British or British colonial ships, sailing from British ports. A more injurious bill in 1733 imposed a duty on molasses imported from the French West Indian Islands, and another forbade the Virginians to export their tobacco to the Continent of Europe. On the other side, in order to help Virginian trade, the cultivation of tobacco was forbidden in England.

But systematic smuggling made these restrictions almost null, and they do not seem to have been an important cause of disaffection. Squabbles had been incessant ever since the colonies became self-conscious communities, but most of these were concerned with the right of the colonists to tax themselves, and especially with the question whether the governors and other officials were to have a fixed salary, or were to be dependent on the good

will of the colonial assemblies. After long wrangling, the colonists got their way.

In all disputes with the mother country the colonists used the sharp, lawyer-like language which has been a tradition in American negotiations with England ever since. But plans of secession hardly existed until the great peace of 1763 had removed the danger from France. The population of the English colonies at this time probably numbered about 1,200,000, compared with which figure the French were a mere handful. But the colonists did not feel able to deal with the French without help from home; and the expulsion of the French flag from Canada was mainly the work of British troops, though Louisbourg was once taken by the New Englanders. The French schemes, in spite of the small number of their colonists, were most ambitiously conceived. They had made their way from Canada to the head waters of the Mississippi, and down the great river to its mouth, founding in 1718 New Orleans on the Gulf of Mexico. The plan was to cut off all the English colonies from their hinterland by a chain of forts from the great lakes to the mouth of the Mississippi. Unfortunately for the French, the base of the great triangle rested on the sea.

The Seven Years War, which was very costly, was mainly a war for North America, though a shrewd Frenchman, who knew the character of the colonists, exclaimed: "Now we have got them!" when the peace, so humiliating to France, was signed. It can hardly be doubted that, in spite of the time-honoured maxim, "No taxation without representation," the home government had the right to ask the colonists to bear a small part of the cost of the war, which had benefited English-speaking Americans far more than the British taxpayer. So thought George Grenville, the Chancellor of the

Exchequer, who in the year after the peace gave notice of a bill requiring that a stamp, for which duty must be paid in England, should be affixed to every agreement in the American colonies. The measure was carried almost unanimously; no one was prepared for the furious opposition which broke out in America. The home government showed a most conciliatory spirit, repealing the obnoxious measure, and inviting Benjamin Franklin to explain the colonial position at the bar of the House of Commons. Franklin's evidence seems to have been most disingenuous; he asserted, contrary to the fact, that the colonists had contributed liberally toward carrying on the war, and that no one in America, "drunk or sober," contemplated secession from the British Empire. In 1767 Townshend made another attempt to get something out of the colonists. He imposed a duty on tea and certain other commodities when imported into America. Once again the colonists raised violent protests; once again Parliament gave way and repealed the duties. As Mr. J. A. Doyle says: "No one who recalls the incidents which followed can speak of the colonists as loyal subjects goaded into rebellion by persistent ill-treatment." In 1771 the Governor of Massachusetts was instructed by the Crown that the salaries of the Commissioners of Customs were not to be taxed. The Assembly replied: "We know of no Commissioners of His Majesty's Customs, nor of any revenue His Majesty has a right to establish in North America." This was a denial of the hitherto undisputed right of the Crown to levy duties on trade.

The famous tea-duty of 1773 was primarily intended to help the East India Company, and secondarily to conciliate the colonists, for the duty which before Townshend's taxes had been a shilling a pound was now to be threepence. But the Americans,

who have not changed much in a century and a half, chose to regard tea as a noxious drug. Boston, New York and Philadelphia forbade it to be sold; Boston placarded the streets with a notice stating that tea was "the worst of plagues," and that those who permitted it to be landed would "betray an inhuman thirst for blood, and should be treated as wretches unworthy to live." Eventually a mob disguised as savages boarded the vessels and threw the cargoes into the harbour.

Such was the beginning of the American rebellion. The leaders promptly organized a reign of terror against the loyalists, and sought to gain the help of the Indians. The war which followed was waged by England in a half-hearted manner, very different from the spirit in which France had been resisted, and was soon to be resisted again. This was perhaps the first occasion on which a strongly anti-patriotic party was vocal and dangerous in England; we now regard it as a matter of course that a section of British opinion will hotly advocate the cause of their country's enemies, whoever they may be. The idea of fighting against our own kith and kin was as repugnant to the English at home as it was welcome to the colonists. The Government was weak and unpopular, and the country was weary of almost incessant wars. Our generals in America, especially Howe, seem to have been thoroughly incompetent. But the issue was decided by a European coalition against England. The French were not slow to perceive or to use the opportunity for revenge which chance had thrown in their way. La Fayette, who is commemorated by statues and street names in several American cities, scarcely pretended to care about America. His objects in placing his sword at the disposal of the rebels were frankly stated by him as "L'abaissement de l'Angleterre, l'avantage de ma patrie, et le bonheur

de l' humanité." Decency required a vague aspiration of this kind in the last place. Again, he is "persuadé que nuire à l' Angleterre c'est servir (oserai je dire c'est venger?) ma patrie." The presence of a French fleet in the West Indies had a disastrous effect upon our military operations. In June, 1779, Spain also declared war against England, and in the following year Russia, Denmark, Holland and Sweden joined the "Armed Neutrality," which was a combination of passive hostility to England. Never before or since have we had to face a European coalition; the prosecution of the war in America was henceforth almost hopeless; France had taken her revenge.

Persistent misrepresentations of the causes of the American rebellion, and of the reasons why it succeeded, have naturally led to many misleading generalizations about the fate of colonial empires. Turgot opined that colonies are like fruit, which drop off the parent tree when they are ripe. The successful rebellion of the Spanish colonies seemed to confirm this judgment. But England has not lost her second Empire; on the contrary, that Empire is peaceably evolving into a commonwealth of free peoples, maintaining excellent relations with each other, and willing to unite wholeheartedly to repel a formidable foreign attack. The success of this great experiment—a true League of Nations in working order—has led some to go to the opposite extreme, and assume that but for the stupidity of British statesmanship under George III, the American colonies might still be politically united with the mother country. The vision of all the English-speaking communities under one flag, imposing peace and freedom on the world, is seductive enough. But it is very doubtful whether any concessions by the Home Government could have satisfied the bitter antagonism of the New Englanders who took the lead in the rebellion. Even after they had

obtained all that they fought for, it was not long before the Americans seized the opportunity to stab England in the back, while we were fighting desperately for our independence and the liberties of Europe against the greatest general of all time. But for Napoleon's foolish invasion of Russia, it is probable that the action of America in 1812 would have been fatal to our country. (It is, however, only fair to say that this war was made by the Southern democrats, and was unpopular, on moral grounds, in New England.) Even if the undivided Empire had survived the Napoleonic War, the question of slavery would almost certainly have led to a successful rebellion of the American colonies. The Southern States would have defended their peculiar institution to the last gasp. Or, if we can suppose that these rocks might have been avoided, it is possible that America, now by far the richest and most populous part of the English-speaking world, would have claimed that the seat of imperial government should be transferred across the Atlantic. Such a suggestion raises the ludicrous possibility that the Empire might have split after a war of independence waged by England! Nevertheless, if goodwill had been present, it is just possible that two nations so richly endowed with political wisdom might have devised some *modus vivendi* which would have kept the English-speaking world together, to the great advantage of both England and America. Such a federation, or close alliance, might have averted the Great War. If this possibility existed, the historian can only regard the War of Independence as one of the great calamities of history, like the capture of Constantinople by the Turks.

Meanwhile we had been solving with far greater success a problem which was later to test British statesmanship in South Africa. The government of French Canada, which had fallen to Britain as the

result of a long struggle, decided by the genius of Pitt and Wolfe, was a new experiment in Colonial history. The French population was then very small, and concentrated in the Province of Quebec. The multiplication of the French Canadians under our flag has been almost unparalleled, and has contrasted strangely with the very slow increase of the population of France itself. From the very first, our Government treated the French with wisdom, fairness, and generosity. On the death of George II the citizens of Montreal declared that Amherst had " behaved to us as a father rather than as a conqueror." The Secretary of State in 1762 not only approved of what Amherst was doing, but gave express orders that no affronts were to be offered to the language, customs, or religion of the French inhabitants. The protection given to the Catholics was represented by the Americans in 1774 as an insidious plot to " reduce the free Protestant colonies to the same state of slavery as themselves." The French Canadians resisted the blandishments of the rebels to persuade them to join in the revolt, and after the war loyalists from the seceding colonies flocked into the Dominion to the number of about 80,000. These new immigrants helped very materially to save Canada from conquest in the war of 1812. Between 1791 and 1841 the English-speaking population of Canada grew from 10,000 to over 400,000.

The eighteenth century began and ended with measures of consolidation at home ; it was a century of wars abroad. In 1707 England and Scotland became one nation by Act of Parliament ; the last year of the century saw the Union of Great Britain and Ireland. The enemy throughout this period was France, with such other powers as France induced to join her. The wars were to a large extent dynastic in origin, and to that extent unjustifiable ; but a

historian must never forget the great saying of Aristotle, that quarrels arise out of small occasions, but not for small objects ; the objects are not small but great. This country has always been impelled to draw the sword against any continental military power which threatens to dominate the whole of Europe ; and in the eighteenth century there was also a political struggle between the new type of absolutism, resting partly on the support of the church—that polity which is called Cæsaropapism—and the type of limited monarchy, resting on the support of the people, which took shape first in our island. Louis XIV espoused the cause of the banished King James II, who stood for despotism and a persecuting Church ; this was also the home policy of the French King, who in 1685 had revoked the Edict of Nantes, driving thousands of Huguenot refugees into England.

The War of the Spanish Succession, which broke out only five years after the Peace of Ryswick, in 1702, was a continuation of the wars of William III. It was of less importance to our overseas Empire than the Seven Years War, which ended in 1763. English soldiers and money were sent to the Continent to help Frederick of Prussia against France ; but the most important events of the war, as far as we were concerned, were the campaigns in India and America. The Treaty of Utrecht secured to England "all Nova Scotia or Acadie with its ancient boundaries," including Newfoundland, and Gibraltar. Halifax was founded in 1749. By the Peace of Paris, in 1763, not only was Nova Scotia secured to England, but "Canada with all its dependencies, the Island of Cape Breton, and all the other islands and coasts in the Gulf and river of St. Lawrence." Further south, the Mississippi was the boundary, leaving New Orleans on the eastern bank to France. Spain ceded Florida and recovered Havana. Several

West Indian islands were given to England, and in Africa Senegambia. The acquisitions in India have been dealt with in another volume of this series. The disastrous war which ended in 1783 cost us not only the American colonies, but Tobago and Senegambia, which were handed back to the French.

The Napoleonic War differed from the wars of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century in that the political enemy was no longer Cæsaropapism, but the Revolution, followed by a military monarchy of a new type, based on the principle of "a career open to the talents." We were fighting for existence as a Great Power, not against the danger of despotism and religious oppression at home. The results of the long struggle, in terms of Empire, were (again excluding our gains in India) that we acquired the islands of St. Lucia, the Seychelles, Mauritius, and Malta; while the unwilling allies of France suffered severely. We took Trinidad from Spain, Heligoland from Denmark, Ceylon, British Guiana, and the Cape of Good Hope from Holland. Strictly, the Cape was handed over to England by the fugitive Stadtholder, to keep it out of the clutches of France. No Englishman, who studies a map of the British Empire, can escape a qualm of conscience when he finds everywhere the names of Dutch possessions which we have taken from them.

The loss of the American colonies was thus followed by the building up of a new Empire, partly as the result of conquest, but partly also by peaceable means. We do not always remember that the Empire as we know it is more recent than the United States. One difficulty arising from American independence was the loss of a dumping ground to which undesirable citizens might be transferred. The Southern States of North America had long been used for this purpose. A solution of the difficulty was suggested by the voyages of discovery

lately made by Captain James Cook. This intrepid navigator had explored, during his first voyage, the coasts of New Zealand and the eastern coasts of Australia, and in 1770 he landed at Botany Bay, so called in compliment to Sir Joseph Banks. It was decided to make this a convict settlement, and the first batch of prisoners was landed in 1788. In 1803 Tasmania was used for the same purpose. The system was popular at home, for instead of the expense of maintaining the convicts, they were sold to contractors for a few pounds, who disposed of them at a profit to employers of labour in the "plantations"; before the War of Independence about 500 a year were thus sent to America. Cheap labour was indispensable in clearing a new country; Tasmania remains to this day largely undeveloped because at the present rate of wages work in the bush is unremunerative. Lord Hobart in 1802 admitted that Sydney was "completely saturated with criminals," and recommended that "it should be allowed to rest and purify" for a few years. But the convict taint was nowhere permanent; under the criminal laws of that time many persons were transported who by no means belonged to the "criminal type," if there is such a thing; and these often found better careers than they could have had at home.

We acquired Australia only by the narrowest possible margin. In 1788 when Phillip left Botany Bay, he saw two French ships approaching the coast. It may be literally true that "England won Australia by six days." Phillip was insistent that free settlers should be encouraged, and the time came when the colonists refused to take any more convicts. It is not often that a good word is said now of the transportation system; but it was better than long terms of imprisonment. Darwin probably spoke the truth when he said: "As a

plan of punishment, transportation has failed. But as a means of making men outwardly honest, of converting vagabonds, most useless in one country, into active citizens of another, and thus giving birth to a new and splendid country, a grand centre of civilization, it has succeeded to a degree perhaps unparalleled in history." From the economic point of view, the Parliamentary Report of 1838, which was unfavourable to the continuance of the system, admitted that " as slave colonies have more rapidly and generally increased in wealth on account of the forced combination of labour, so in these colonies of criminals, where the free settlers were not only provided with slaves free of expense, but likewise with an excellent market, a larger amount of wealth has been accumulated in a shorter space of time than perhaps in any other community of the same size in the world." It may also be observed that Tasmania, in which more than 40,000 convicts were landed between 1840 and 1844, is now the most orderly and conservative of all the Australasian colonies.

The Malay Peninsula, which has proved a very valuable possession, was acquired about the same time, and British Honduras was taken from Spain after desultory fighting which ended in the defeat of a Spanish squadron by the settlers in 1798. Ascension was garrisoned in 1815, and till 1922 was governed like a ship of war under the Admiralty. It has now been transferred to the Colonial Office. Sierra Leone was founded in 1787, as a philanthropic enterprise, a colony for liberated slaves. This acquisition was one result of the growing humanitarian feeling about slavery, which led Dr. Johnson to drink to the next negro insurrection in the West Indies. In 1807 the slave trade, though not slavery, was abolished by Parliament.

In spite of this expansion of the Empire, the

opinion of the time with regard to overseas dependencies was pessimistic. Canning entertained exaggerated hopes about the future of the liberated South American States, which, instead of being "a new world to redress the balance of the old," went through a long period of revolutions and pronunciamientos, and were best governed when under the heel of some competent dictator. Huskisson in 1828 had no doubt that the Colonies will some day "be themselves free nations," and by freedom he meant separation from England. Sir Thomas Munro in 1814 uses very modern language about India. "We see no reason to doubt that if we steadily pursue the proper measures we shall in time so far improve the character of our Indian subjects as to enable them to govern and protect themselves." The French West Indian islands, except Tobago and St. Lucia, were handed back because, as Castlereagh said, it was "expedient freely to open to France the means of peaceful occupation, and it was not the interest of this country to make her a military and conquering instead of a commercial and pacific nation."

This attitude became stronger rather than weaker as the influence of the Manchester school increased. Sir F. Rogers, afterwards Lord Blachford, said in 1854, "It is a great pity that, give as much as you will, you can't please the colonists with anything short of absolute independence, so that it is not easy to say how you are to accomplish what we are, I suppose, all looking to, the eventual parting company on good terms." Disraeli, who had himself, at least on one occasion, spoken of the Colonies as a weight round our necks, in 1872 accused the Liberal party of attempting, "pertinaciously and energetically, to effect the disintegration of the British Empire." This had certainly not been true of Liberalism before 1860. The names of Durham,

Charles Buller and Molesworth hold a very honourable place in the roll of imperial statesmen. But after the Crimean War the anti-imperialists had their innings, and revived the sentiments of Joseph Hume, who in 1823 had declared in Parliament that the Colonies, instead of being an addition to the strength of the country, increase its weakness. This doctrinaire Little-Englandism even led the Home Government to rebuff the loyalty of the Colonies. New Zealand in 1869 and 1870 protested to Lord Granville against "the policy of abandonment," while the Colony was in difficulties with native wars. The Colonial Government claimed that New Zealand should be "practically recognized as an integral portion of the Empire, and not be thrust out beyond its pale, as of less consideration than a British subject in foreign lands." The action of Lord Granville was "not only unfriendly but scarcely reconcilable with any other motive than a desire to drive New Zealand from the Empire." There was talk in New Zealand of secession, and of joining the United States, which at the time was believed to be casting covetous eyes on the neighbouring Fiji Islands. These islands had become an Alsatia, and at last, in spite of Lord Granville's opinion that "there would be more disadvantage in Great Britain taking the responsibility of the government than in the risk of the United States assuming the protectorate," Fiji was added to the Empire in 1874. However, when Lord Carnarvon suggested that the Australasian Colonies should contribute the very small sum of £4,000 a year to the administration, his request was refused. They again refused, two years later, to give any help in paying for the government of New Guinea and the New Hebrides, which the New South Wales governments wished Great Britain to annex. The Home Government, made sadder and wiser by the catastrophe of the

American Colonies, accepted these acts of meanness as part of the burden of Empire.

The new spirit, which developed between 1880 and 1890, had already received noble expression from Lord Durham, who in his famous report on Canada, said: "I cannot participate in the notion that it is the part either of prudence or honour to abandon our countrymen when our government of them has plunged them into disorder, or our territory when we discover that we have not turned it to proper account. The experiment of keeping colonies and of governing them well ought at least to have a trial ere we abandon for ever the vast dominion which might supply the wants of our surplus population, and raise up millions of fresh consumers of our manufactures, and producers of a supply for our wants." Lord John Russell also expressed "the fullest confidence that our Colonies, while continuing to pursue their present independent course of progress and prosperity, will combine with it the jealous maintenance of ties cemented alike by feeling and principle." Lord Elgin, too, in 1850, told his countrymen that they must "renounce the habit of telling the Colonies that the colonial is a provisional existence. You must allow them to believe that without severing the bonds which unite them to Great Britain, they may attain a degree of perfection and of social and political development to which organized communities of free men have a right to aspire."

The new spirit of pride in the Empire was stimulated by three books which attained such popularity that they seemed to have put the match to a mass of patriotic feeling which was ready to take fire. These were Sir John Seeley's *Expansion of England*, Froude's *Oceana*, and Sir Charles Dilke's *Problems of Greater Britain*. A Colonial Conference was summoned in 1887, as the first fruits

of the new enthusiasm. The Australian representatives expressed a hope " that from this time forward colonial policy will be considered Imperial policy ; that colonial interests will be considered and felt to be Imperial interests ; that they will be carefully studied, and that when once they are understood they will be most determinedly upheld." When the Conference met again in 1894, not in London, but at Ottawa, it was plain to all that the imperial tie had grown stronger in the interval. Arrangements for differential customs to favour trade within the Empire were discussed, but the difficulties proved insurmountable. An Imperial Federation League was formed, which, though it failed to carry out its main programme, was of great service in bringing the distant parts of the Empire together. At the third conference, which met in London in 1902, it was decided that it should meet every four years, and in 1906 it adopted the title of " Imperial Conference."

Imperialism culminated in the years before the Boer War, which dealt it a severe blow. There was something very distasteful to Englishmen in a war against a few thousand " men in their shirts," who were fighting to preserve their independence, and who, in the peculiar conditions of South African warfare, were able to maintain a long resistance to regular troops enormously superior to them in numbers. It is not surprising that many Englishmen thought the war not merely ignominious, but unjust. It has, however, now become clear that the Boer War was the first round in the great struggle between England and Germany, which broke out fifteen years later. Our South African colonists were unable to defend themselves against the Dutch, armed and encouraged by Germany. To break up the militarism of the Transvaal, and then to give the Boers complete self-government, was the only

way to save that portion of our Empire. Whether our Government realized it or not, they showed wise statesmanship by declaring war in 1899, even though they risked provoking a hostile coalition in Europe, and by conceding self-government to the new provinces when it might have seemed dangerous to do so.

No account of British imperial policy would be complete without taking notice of the humanitarian movement which gathered strength during and after the Napoleonic War. The growth of humanitarian doctrine had been one feature of eighteenth century thought ; it was one of the factors which led to the French Revolution, though it was entirely unable to check the horrors which followed the collapse of authority in France. In the eighteenth century, humanitarianism had been preached mainly by free-thinkers ; the Church was on the whole unfavourable to it. But in England it was now almost completely free from connection with revolutionary and anti-religious ideas ; it was warmly supported by the religious sects, and to a less extent by the Established Church. At the beginning of the century it concentrated itself mainly upon the slave trade, and upon the institution of slavery. The traffic in African slaves had been contended for between European nations as a lucrative prize ; the spoils, unfortunately, fell to this country. The trade had been pronounced by Statute " very advantageous to the nation " ; it was necessary, in order to provide the plantations with " a sufficient number of negroes at reasonable prices." Slavery was indeed indispensable to the prosperity of the West India Islands. But morally it was indefensible. Not only were the negroes kidnapped from their homes and transported under circumstances of great cruelty, but the lot of the black slave was more miserable, because more hopeless, than that of the slaves under

the Roman Empire. There was no customary manumission of slaves in America. The agitation against slavery was purely philanthropic, and no one can possibly regret that it succeeded in its two campaigns, the slave trade being abolished in 1807, and slavery in 1833. As usual, we tried to persuade the planters that they would not lose much by the change—an assurance which the facts soon belied, and the compensation which we gave to the owners, twenty million pounds, though generous, was only about half the real value of the emancipated blacks. It is terrible to reflect what might have happened if slavery had not been abolished before the partition of Africa among the Great Powers. The whole of the Dark Continent might have become a gigantic slave farm, with consequences to the social and economic condition of Europe itself which cannot be calculated.

The support given to the Greeks in their war of independence was also almost entirely philanthropic, and therefore incomprehensible to Metternich, who was furious when he heard of the battle of Navarino. At this time the ruling class had had a good classical education, and were enthusiastic Hellenists. Later in the century, from similar motives, the nation became ashamed of the support which Disraeli had given to Turkey, and allowed Germany to take our place as the friend and adviser of the Sultan. Unhappily we were unable to give any practical protection to the Christian subjects of the Porte, being thwarted by other nations with whom humanitarian motives hardly count at all. At an earlier date, the present of the Ionian Islands to Greece was what it is the fashion to call a "gesture" of Philhellenic generosity; it was a fine action in itself, and procured for us the lasting gratitude of the Greek nation. Equally generous and disinterested were the help and sympathy which we gave to the

Italians in their struggle for unity, and, still earlier, our refusal to lend our fleet to aid in the repressive policy of the Holy Alliance. This abstention, at a time when we had no rival on the seas, was of great value to liberty and civilization. But it has to be remembered that a comparatively high-minded policy is a kind of luxury; when a nation feels itself to be seriously threatened, it seldom allows any humanitarian considerations to interfere with its safety. In the nineteenth century we could afford to be generous, and sometimes we were so.

It is a proof of the haphazard manner in which our Empire grew, that so little use was made of systematic colonization. It was, indeed, the intention of the Home Government to claim possession of the land in unpeopled Colonies like Australia, and to sell it in small lots to settlers who would develop it by their own labour. The price of the ground was to be spent in opening out communications and improving the land generally. But the Colonies were not satisfied with this arrangement, which would not have been easy to carry out in the wide sheep-runs of Australia; and so it came about that vast tracts were alienated to a few individuals, who in some cases retarded the progress of the Colony by holding up their land in the hope of rising prices. The few experiments which were made in systematic colonization were not uniformly successful; but they were successful enough to prove the great value of the system. For instance, in 1819 Parliament decided to send out a large batch of emigrants to Cape Colony, giving each a hundred acres and another hundred for every male labourer who went with him. More than three thousand went out in the following spring, and became the nucleus of a consistently loyal group in the eastern part of the Colony. Gibbon Wakefield, to whom Canada and the Empire owe much, was a strong

supporter of colonization. One of his plans was to devote part of the money raised by the sale of land to assisting the emigration of women and girls. The years after the Napoleonic War were marked by a great exodus to Canada; in one year fifty thousand emigrants left Britain for this Colony. In New Zealand the presence of the Maoris caused peculiar difficulties; but by an ingenious arrangement Otago was founded as a Scottish settlement, in co-operation with the General Assembly of the Free Church, while Canterbury was to be an Anglican settlement. We cannot doubt that Germans, with the same opportunities, would have carried colonization much further, and that they would have imitated the Romans in planting *coloniæ* at the most important strategic points of their dominions. In our colonies almost everything was muddled; but the good fortune of the English in the nineteenth century gave leisure for the rectification of blunders.

The mother country soon abandoned any notion of acting on the Roman maxim, *divide et impera*. The consolidation of the Dominions was encouraged by the home government. The Dominion of Canada was constituted in 1867, and in 1871 British Columbia joined, in consideration of a promise to begin a trans-continental railway at once. The Canadian Pacific Railway, it can hardly be doubted, saved the western territories from being absorbed by the United States. Australian Federation came later, in 1900, after being much obstructed by inter-colonial jealousies. New Zealand found in the thousand miles of sea which divides it from the Australian continent a reason for keeping out. The great obstacles in the way of South African Union have been happily surmounted. These acts of consolidation reflect great credit on the statesmanship both of the home government and of the Dominions.

One expedient which has been on the whole successful is the return to the old system of Chartered Companies. They have been useful in forcing the hand of reluctant governments, and so preventing valuable possessions from being snapped up by other powers. Uganda and Nigeria would almost certainly have been lost to the Empire if it had not been for the enterprise of Sir W. Mackinnon and Sir George Goldie; and there is reason to think that the Germans were already busy in Matabeleland when Cecil Rhodes intervened. The true function of these companies is as skirmishers in front of the main army. They acquire new provinces, which may afterwards come under the direct control of the Crown, or be given self-government.

Perhaps the most difficult of all imperial problems was that of South Africa. We acquired the Cape of Good Hope as the result of the wars with France, not with a view to colonization, but as a halfway house on the road to India. It was already settled by white men, of mixed Dutch and French descent. The natives were in a state of half slavery, which was repugnant to humanitarian ideas at home. The interference of our Government with these conditions led to a series of treks, the first of which occurred in 1836. The migrants were followed by the English first into the Orange River State and then into Natal; a body of Boers then crossed the river Vaal and founded, about 1850, the Transvaal Republic. Our Government recognized the Transvaal in 1852, and the Orange Free State in 1854. The abandonment of this last province was perhaps the high-water mark of the *laissez-aller* policy already mentioned. The Assembly of the province, consisting of seventy-six Dutch and nineteen English, clung to the British connection; independence was forced upon them by ignorant doctrinaires at home.

Imperialistic ideas, combined with the discovery

of diamonds in the Orange Free State and of gold in the Transvaal, led to an abrupt reversal of this policy. The diamond fields were seized in return for very inadequate compensation, and the Transvaal was soon afterwards annexed, an undoubtedly high-handed proceeding. The Liberal Government was already preparing to make large concessions, when the Burghers rebelled, and were successful in two or three skirmishes, absurdly magnified into battles. In August, 1881, the independence of the two Boer republics was recognized, subject to a vague acknowledgment of British suzerainty.

The great wealth which began to pour from the Rand disturbed this settlement, and the Boer War of 1899-1902 followed. The military preparations of the Transvaal had paralysed British diplomacy in Europe for years; and it was strongly suspected that Germany had designs upon South Africa as a whole. The war, which damaged both the material and moral prestige of England, and disgusted a large part of the population with expansionist ideas, was, as has been said already, an unfortunate necessity. In 1906, only five years after the cessation of hostilities, the Transvaal was granted self-government; the same rights were given to what was then called the Orange River Colony in the following year. In 1910 the Union of South Africa was constituted, with Capetown as the capital, and Pretoria as the seat of the executive government. Only the native question remained, and still remains, unsolved. There is some ill-treatment, and a determination on the part of the white labourers to exclude the Kaffirs from skilled employments. Considering that the Basutos are now civilized and prosperous, and that the Bantu Kaffirs as a whole are physically a magnificent race, the prospects of the white population in South Africa, under these conditions, cannot be regarded as secure. The

Europeans are dooming themselves to the fate which always befalls an aristocracy living among, and on the labour of, a subject population of another race.

In Northern Africa the British Government was drawn against its will into an imperialist adventure. In 1882 a revolt broke out in the Egyptian Army under Arabi Pasha, who held the rank of colonel. The rebellion was directed partly against the Khedive, and partly against French and English influence, which, it was said, was exercised solely in favour of the bondholders who had financed the Khedive Ismail in his career of wild extravagance. These two powers had established a Condominium over the whole government of Egypt, had removed the spendthrift Ismail after he had dismissed his European ministers in 1879, and installed his son Tewfik in his place. It would have been natural for France and England to deal with the revolt together ; but Gambetta was no longer at the helm in France, and the French unexpectedly left the Gladstone Cabinet to act alone. The revolt was quickly suppressed, and the Suez Canal made safe. Thus began an occupation which continued till the Great War, when a regular Protectorate was proclaimed. The result was a complete alienation from France, only partially healed by our recognition of the French conquest of Tunis, and by diplomatic help in Morocco. But the possession of the Suez Canal was of such vital importance to the Empire that evacuation was not seriously considered. Our occupation of Egypt led to further difficulties and conquests. The whole of the Sudan as far as the Great Lakes had been brought under Egyptian administration by Ismail, not to the advantage of the black population. Very soon after the campaign against Arabi, a fanatical rising in the Sudan under a bellicose Mahdi or Messiah began to attract attention. The Egyptian troops were unable to

stand against the Mahdists, or dervishes, as we called them, and "Chinese" Gordon, who was unwisely sent out to withdraw the remaining garrisons, allowed himself to be shut up in Khartoum and was eventually killed at the storm of that town. After a long delay, while British rule was being consolidated in Egypt, and the Egyptian troops were being trained, a considerable Anglo-Egyptian force under Kitchener advanced up the Nile, and destroyed the host of the Khalifa, the successor of the Mahdi, in a murderous battle. The whole Sudan was thus added to the British sphere of influence, after a serious difficulty with a small French expedition under Marchand, which had reached Fashoda on the Upper Nile. The idea of an all-British line of communication by rail and water, between the Cape and Cairo, fired the imagination of our imperialists.

The French had refused to help us in pacifying Egypt, but they strongly objected to our staying there. Lord Cromer, probably one of the greatest administrators whom our country has produced, was persistently hampered by French intrigues, until the shadow of the approaching struggle with Germany compelled both nations to seek an amicable settlement of this and other differences. Support in Morocco was the price paid by England for a cessation of unfriendly action in Egypt.

The diplomacy of the years before the Great War has been so fully discussed from every point of view in numberless books, some of which have revealed the inner workings of the different Foreign Offices in a manner never before known, that the main facts are fresh in the minds of all readers of present-day history. Our own country, like the other European powers, lived in constant fear of a hostile coalition. For more than a hundred years we had escaped this danger, mainly because our naval

supremacy was a great safeguard to all other nations. The separation of sea-power from land-power made it almost impossible for any ambitious Continental nation to dominate Europe. The British Empire was tolerated on the tacit conditions that the British army was to be kept too small to threaten any European nation, and that the navy was not to be used to hinder the foreign trade of any of our rivals. The downfall of England would have reduced all other nations except one to a secondary rank. But this security was held on a precarious tenure. A nation that is both very rich and comparatively weak for war is almost certain to be attacked and plundered. Attempts were made to form a coalition against us during the South African War, which revealed the danger of the "splendid isolation" on which we had prided ourselves. The alliance with Japan was a definite abandonment of our time-honoured policy. We were more than once in danger of war both with France and Russia, and the conduct of both these Powers had been often so unfriendly that our statesmen thought seriously of coming to an understanding with the Central European Group, with whom there was no tradition of enmity. With Italy our relations had been always amicable; Austrians and Englishmen have always liked each other; and we were very slow to realize that Germany might be a dangerous neighbour. It is probable that if any statesman of the calibre of Bismarck had been at the helm in Germany, care would have been taken not to alarm Great Britain by competitive naval programmes. Germany would have kept up an appearance of friendship with England until she had settled accounts with her enemies on her Eastern and Western fronts. But the German Emperor had no settled policy, except to sow tares among the wheat all over Europe. Sometimes he dallied sincerely with the idea of

friendship with England ; but usually, as the secret documents made public since the war show clearly, he was intriguing against us and hoping to make a coalition which should destroy the British Empire. On one occasion, in July, 1905, he actually persuaded Nicholas II to sign a treaty against England, to the dismay of his ministers when they heard what he had done. Before this, in September, 1902, he writes to Nicholas : " We must look at our two navies as one great organization belonging to one great continent," and signs, " Willy, Admiral of the Atlantic." In October, 1904, after the Dogger Bank incident, he telegraphed to the Tsar a deliberate falsehood : " Heard from private sources that Hull fishermen have already acknowledged that they have seen foreign steamcraft among their boats ; so there has been foul play." In the following month he suggests that Russia shall " make some military demonstrations on the Persian and Afghan frontier, even should the forces at your disposal not suffice for a real attack on India itself." Our statesmen became reluctantly convinced that no agreement with Germany was possible, since that Power was unwilling to abstain from naval competition with us, and since no reliance could be placed on the shifty diplomacy of the Emperor. Indeed, the gauntlet had been ostentatiously thrown down in the preamble to the Flottengesetz of 1898. The only alternative was to join the rival combination of France and Russia, a policy which was dictated by considerations of self-preservation, since our relations with both Powers had been almost uniformly unfriendly. Accordingly, with some help from King Edward VII, whose genial personality and unfailing tact made him a valuable mediator, our differences, first with France and then with Russia, were composed, and conversations were held, without the knowledge of the public, with a view to co-operation

that neutrality in a European war was impossible; the majority were convinced pacifists, interested almost exclusively in social reforms. An emperor or dictator might possibly have averted the war by an explicit declaration to Germany; it is unreasonable to blame the three ministers who eventually took the rest of the Cabinet with them for not doing earlier what would have only caused their own immediate fall from power.

The other possible policy, it is said, would have been to cut ourselves loose from European entanglements, and make an alliance with America. No nation is more interested than the United States in preventing the supreme power by land and sea from falling into the same hands. The overthrow of the British Empire by Germany would have compelled America to keep up a powerful fleet and army at enormous expense, and to prepare for a possible war in South America in defence of the Monroe Doctrine. The ambitions of Germany in Southern Brazil were well known. No nation had benefited more than the United States by the Pax Britannica which had guarded the high seas for a hundred years before 1914. No attack upon America could be made without British assistance, and the possibility of an attack by Great Britain itself was precluded both by the indefensible position of Canada and by the sentiments of blood-brotherhood which counted for much in England, though for little in America. The dream of a federation of the English-speaking nations has long been supremely attractive to Englishmen; the identity of language, institutions and traditions made such a vision seem reasonable; and many lovers of peace hoped, as a few still hope, that the nations of English descent and speech might combine to put a stop to the mad militarism which threatens civilization with total ruin. But events have shown that to rely

upon the help of the United States would be to trust in a broken reed. The cordial friendship which many Englishmen enjoy with individual Americans, and the numerous ties by marriage with American families, must not blind us either to the intense concentration of the American people at large on what they consider their own interests, or to the prevailing unfriendliness of America, as expressed by its politicians and journalists, to this country. It has now become certain that the American Government seriously contemplated taking action against us in the earlier part of the Great War. Whatever sentiment was allowed to enter into their calculations was in favour of France, not of England. And if in the future we are attacked by a European coalition, we may take it as probable that the United States will leave us to our fate, unless, indeed, we are invaded by a black army. It would be difficult to find any well-informed American, however favourable his personal views might be to this country, who would say that friendship with America could bring us any security. Nor is it possible, under present conditions, to disembarrass ourselves of Continental politics. The advantages of our insular position, from which we have gained greatly in the past, are much less than in former days.

We were, therefore, bound, by considerations of safety, to enter into a struggle which did not immediately concern us ; to give help, to the utmost of our power, to Allies who might be expected to show no gratitude ; and to mortgage our whole future in an internecine conflict from which we had nothing to gain and everything to lose. No greater misfortune has ever befallen Britain and the British Empire.

The Great War was decided, as former wars had been, by Sea Power, though there were ominous signs that it may be the last great war to be so decided. But for our assistance, there can be little

doubt that the struggle in the West would have been over in a very few months, and that Russia, hopeless of victory, would have submitted before the end of 1915. The sea power alone made a long war, a war of attrition, possible, and in the end the resources of Germany failed before those of the Allies. When we consider that it was fear of our fleet which kept Italy from fulfilling her engagements to help Germany and Austria; that owing to the protection of the fleet supplies from America came in regularly to the Western Allies; that German foreign trade was at once extinguished, the German military authorities hampered by the want of certain war materials, and the civil population at last reduced by the blockade to a state of real privation, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the British Navy, though it fought only one serious battle, which did not add to the lustre of our fame on the water, was the decisive factor in the war.

Among the miscalculations of the German Government none was a greater disillusionment than the proof of solidarity in the British Empire. In German schools and universities the idea had been sedulously propagated that the Empire would fall to pieces at a touch. South Africa, it was expected, would secede, Australasia either become independent or fall as prize of war to victorious Germany; India would revolt, Canada abstain from participation in the war, and Ireland would once more see her opportunity in England's difficulty. These expectations were falsified, though not entirely. The Indian princes showed commendable loyalty; the rising in South Africa was a feeble affair, unsupported by the large majority of the Dutch; treason in Ireland was not strong enough to give any serious trouble; and the contingents from Canada and Australasia were not only extraordinarily large for the population of those Dominions, but were exceptionally

valuable from the military point of view. There are, however, a few deductions to be made. The Government did not venture to introduce compulsory military service into Ireland, and that island played a very small part in helping to win the war. The Indian contingents were less useful in the field than some had hoped. The climate had something to do with their comparative failure, but the terrible stress of European fighting was new to the experience of even the most warlike Asiatics. The large Canadian contingent was mainly composed of lads born in England, many of whom crossed the frontier from the United States in order to enlist as Canadians, before America entered the war. The French Canadians were poorly represented, although they might have chosen to give their lives either for the country of their origin or for that of their political allegiance. The Roman Catholic priests, both in Canada and Australia, used their influence to impede recruiting, and in Canada they prevented many thousands of French-speaking Canadians from joining the colours. This was happily not the attitude of their Church either in England or in France.

There were other expectations which were falsified by the event. It had been a commonplace of historians to say that a nation is rendered soft and effeminate by a long peace, so that its soldiers, when suddenly called upon to fight, show a deterioration in military qualities. This notion was most surprisingly refuted by the conduct of the chief belligerents. There was certainly, as might have been expected, a lack of military science in the nations which had not cultivated the art of war by land, notably in the English and North Americans. Blunders were made which were very costly in human life, especially in the earlier stages of the war, when young officers exposed and sacrificed themselves in a way which

was demanded neither by the immediate situation nor by the interests of the army. But as regards personal courage and endurance under the most trying circumstances it is probable that no armies ever showed such fine qualities. New engines of destruction were used for the first time, some of them very horrible; the tension was prolonged month by month and year by year, in a manner wholly unknown in the wars of the past, when armies had perhaps two or three days of hard fighting in a year. The men did not, indeed, often suffer from hunger; but the life in deep trenches, flooded with water and swarming with rats and vermin, must have been a veritable nightmare. And yet there was no flinching and comparatively little grumbling. This was expected of the old army, sacrificed in the first months of the fighting, probably the finest troops who took part in the war. But it was also noticed that the townsmen, drawn from sedentary occupations, who had probably never killed anything larger than a wasp, made as good soldiers as the country folk. It had been supposed that the Highlanders, with their splendid physique and picturesque costume, were more formidable to the enemy than the English regiments. But it was on the English regiments that the brunt of the fighting fell, and some who served through the war thought that the exemplary conduct of these units hardly received sufficient recognition at home. On the whole, the war tended to refute the maxim often quoted during the Napoleonic campaigns, that the best soldiers are roughs commanded by gentlemen. The experience of the Great War was rather that well-educated and intelligent men make better privates than barbarians. The Canadians and Australians received universal and well-deserved compliments, though it was noticed that the contingents from the heated plains of Australia showed

at times a ferocity which is seldom found among Englishmen. The war also proved that the French, Germans, and English are far more stubborn fighters than the other European nations. No doubt the Russians, with whom administrative incompetence is a tradition, were never given a fair chance. In some of their battles the guns were without ammunition, and the infantry shared one rifle among three men. In spite of these disadvantages, they fought doggedly for two years and a half, and it was proved once again that it takes a great deal of hammering to break up a Russian army. The majority of the Austrian armies had no heart in the struggle, and were very greatly inferior to the Germans.

The French, in virtue of their superior military science, were regarded by the German Higher Command as their most formidable opponents, though before the end of the war the English were very nearly, if not quite, their equals. But after the defeat of General Nivelle several French regiments mutinied, and there was a momentary danger of their whole line giving way ; nothing of this kind occurred in the British contingent.

On a fair estimate, it must be admitted that the achievement of the German armies was the most remarkable feature of the war. It is true that they had the advantage of the inner lines ; but they were from the first in the position of a blockaded city, cut off from outside supplies, and generally outnumbered. The German people were right in thinking that no such powerful instrument as their army had ever been seen in the world before. It was not till the summer of 1918 that their effort began perceptibly to slacken. They were intelligent enough to see that the addition of an inexhaustible stream of fresh troops from America made ultimate defeat certain, and the discovery that they had

been deliberately deceived with false hopes made them bitter against the Home Government. General Ludendorff may be right in saying that the German military machine was rather broken up from within by treason, than defeated by the Allies; but the failure of *morale*, so far as it was real, was a failure of the nation as a whole. It is the business of the Government and General Staff to avoid putting such a strain on the resolution of the nation as human nature is unable to bear. However, no condemnation of the German system of government can justly be based on the result of the war. On the contrary, it is unlikely that a democracy would have come so near to defeating the whole world, or would have maintained such admirable discipline until the final crash.

A very sinister feature of the Great War was the breakdown of international law, and the reappearance of barbarities to non-combatants which had long been banished from civilized warfare. The war itself was not a breach of international law; the invasion of Belgium was admittedly an infraction, to be justified only by the plea that it was necessary, if Germany intended to win. It was a bad precedent, to be followed by numerous other illegalities, excused by the same argument. Germany at the beginning of the war sowed the North Sea with mines, contrary to international law, and our Government strained the meaning of contraband to include all commodities which might help Germany to prolong the war. If this principle was not thoroughly carried out, it was only from fear of complications with neutral countries, and especially with the United States. Finally, neutral ships were made subject to capture if they were destined to a neutral port near Germany, unless they had received a pass at an Allied port. Neutral countries were virtually included in the blockade, because our ships were

unable to blockade German ports at close range. The submarine was a more inhuman violation of law, because it was impossible to save the lives of passengers on torpedoed ships. Moreover, it was impossible to argue that the British ports were blockaded, or that a blockade, if it existed, justified the sinking of passenger ships in mid-Atlantic or in the Mediterranean. The use of poison gas, and dropping bombs from the air upon towns outside the zone of military operations, are reversions to savagery. It is not true that cruel weapons and practices are always employed if they are effective. The use of poisoned arrows, though advantageous in warfare before the discovery of gunpowder, had been discarded by civilized nations even in antiquity; and the massacre of non-combatants was held by international practice to be utterly unjustifiable, though victorious troops after a storm might sometimes break loose, as they did even in the Napoleonic War, which was chivalrously conducted on both sides except between the French and the Spanish guerillas. The excuse is often offered, that whereas former wars were conducted by armies, in the Great War the whole population took part, so that the distinction between combatants and non-combatants no longer exists. This plea is not valid. Non-combatants have always participated in making the continuance of a war possible; they have kept the industrial and agricultural machinery going in circumstances of abnormal strain; they have given their time and money freely to the national cause. There was no generic difference in the position of non-combatants between the Great War and earlier wars. The disappearance of chivalry and moderation was mainly due to the extreme alarm felt by all the belligerent nations. They were all conscious that they were fighting, not for a dynasty, or for territory, or for plunder, but for their very existence.

Something must also be allowed for the decay of belief in a law of nations, resting on sacred and absolute sanctions. The cynical maxims of Machiavelli, and the modern idea of the God-State exalted above morality, had increasingly dominated political theory and practice. The cult of nationality has been the parent of almost as many crimes against humanity as what men called religion four hundred years ago. This retrogression is the more ominous when we reflect that one of the military discoveries of the Great War was that no fortified town can be defended except as a knot in a long line of trenches. In spite of the difficulty of breaking through a system of trenches, protected by barbed wire and other devices, the attack seems to have established its preponderance over the defence. There were no sieges on the western front. But when the attack overmasters the defence, civilization is always in danger. It is generally assumed that if another great war breaks out, the capitals of the opposing powers will be destroyed in the course of it.

Another miscalculation was that the Socialists in the different countries would act in concert to make war impossible. There was much to favour this idea. Modern socialism is international. It decries the idea of patriotism, having very little love or loyalty for the nation or its flag, and cherishing the conviction that nationalism is a hindrance to the civil war of classes which it desires to promote. Revolutionists desire peace for the reason given in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* :—

> "This peace is nothing but to rust iron, increase traitors, and breed ballad-makers.
> Aye, and it makes men hate one another.
> Reason; because they then less need one another."

They also consider that the wholesale destruction of accumulated wealth which war brings about is an injury to the working class, by depriving them of

what they have been in the habit of regarding as their prospective booty. In all countries, though least in France, there has been a considerable amount of aggressive anti-patriotism. In England, whenever the country has to go to war, we take it for granted that the same faction will come forward as the friends of their country's enemies. England, it appears, differs from other misguided criminals in never being in the right, even by accident. In Italy the Socialists were responsible for the great disaster of Caporetto. In Germany Ludendorff, in the bitterness of his soul, accuses the Socialists of wishing for and promoting the defeat of Germany; but of this there is very little evidence. Many thought that the Socialists in all countries would refuse to fight, and would therefore bring the war to an early end, or prevent it from breaking out. But those who argued in this way underestimated the strength of nationalism, and the resources of governments to crush intestine treason. The social pressure that was brought to bear on disloyalists was stronger than the theoretical arguments of internationalism. The so-called capitalistic régime—it should be called modern industrialism—proved itself able to resist a heavier strain than most of its critics would have thought possible. It was, however, noticed that the masses steadily refused to bear any considerable part of the financial burden, and that they exacted, as the price of their loyalty, a pledge that after the war their economic position should be actually improved, in spite of the enormous sacrifices made by the nation as a whole. This involved either a repudiation of nearly the whole war debt by means of inflation, as in Germany, Austria, Italy, and France, or crushing taxation laid solely upon the richer classes, as in England. This object-lesson will not be lost upon the nations of Europe. It is probable that those who have anything to lose will be the most strenuous

opponents of another war. It is at any rate unlikely that the friends of the existing order will again be tempted to risk the chances of a great war in order to stave off a social revolution. As this motive is never avowed, it is difficult to judge how far it influenced the minds of the governing classes before the World War. There is not much doubt that it did weigh with Napoleon III and his advisers in 1870; for with the advent of Gambetta and Rochefort the foundations of the Second Empire had begun to be shaken, and a successful war with Prussia would have given Napoleon a new lease of power. In 1914 the monarchist and militarist régime in Germany was increasingly threatened by the growth of the Social Democratic vote, which kept pace with the growing wealth and the industrialization of the country. A successful war would have greatly strengthened the position of the Empire. Russia, there is reason to think, had decided that a war with Germany was inevitable, and it is probable that the perilous internal state of the country made some Russian politicians willing to gamble for desperate stakes. Even in England, a revolutionary strike of a very dangerous kind was being prepared for the autumn, and was averted only by the outbreak of war. But it is now certain that another war would be utterly ruinous to property-owners, and in this knowledge lies the greatest hope that peace will be maintained.

The remarkable changes in the distribution of wealth since 1914 belong rather to the next chapter, on Industrialism. But the cost of the war in human lives is an imperial matter; and as the facts are less generally known than the military and naval events of the war, which I have decided not to discuss or describe in this book, it may be interesting to give the facts and figures, as collected by Vedel-Petersen and Dumas for the Carnegie Endowment to promote

International Peace. Although this volume is concerned with England only, the figures of our own losses will gain in significance by being compared with the casualties of other belligerents. And the ingratitude of our Allies is such that a plain statement of our sacrifices is demanded.

The most astonishing fact in the casualty lists of former wars is the enormous wastage from sickness. For example, in the British Navy between 1793 and 1815, 6,663 were killed by the enemy, 13,621 drowned or killed by shipwrecks or fire, and 72,103 died of disease or accident on board ship. In the British Army during the same period, 25,569 were killed or died of wounds, and 193,851 died of disease. The total number mobilized is given as 793,110, a number which, we may remark, is not very much smaller, in proportion to the population, than the total mobilized in the Great War, and the percentage of dead is considerably greater than between 1914 and 1918. The total loss of life in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars is very variously estimated. Fröhlich's estimate of just under six million is probably too low. The real total, we may guess, approximated to the losses in the Great War. In the Crimean War, the French lost 20,240 killed, and 75,375 by disease, out of 309,268 effectives. The British lost 4,602 killed, and 17,580 by disease, out of 97,864 effectives. The Russians are said to have lost over 600,000, mainly by disease ; but Russian statistics are not reliable. The Austrians, who did not fight at all, lost 35,000 men, about 12½ per cent of their effectives, by disease. In the American Civil War the proportion of deaths by disease was already less. The Federals, according to Fröhlich, lost 110,000 killed, and 224,586 by disease, the Confederates 72,000 killed, and 120,000 by disease, in addition to 384,000 " missing." But all figures in this war are uncertain. In the Franco-Prussian

War of 1870, the French losses are given as 26,500 killed, and 14,648 died of disease; but here again there are wide discrepancies. In the Boer War we lost 7,534 killed, and 14,382 by disease. It is worth noting that the diminution of deaths by disease has altered the balance of risks run by officers and privates respectively; for whereas the officers pay a double toll in deaths caused by the enemy's fire, disease removes a larger percentage among the privates.

In the Great War, Westergaard estimates that the military forces alone lost 8 million killed and three million by disease. This does not include the influenza pandemic of 1918, which caused something like twenty million deaths, more than half of them in India alone. It is impossible to say whether this plague was caused or greatly increased by the World War. Vedel-Petersen gives the number of killed in the belligerent nations as follows, the numbers being given in thousands. Russia, 1,700; Germany, 1,600; France, 1,385; Great Britain, 900; Austria-Hungary, 800; Italy, 364; Turkey, 250; United States, 50; the smaller nations, about 435. Losses by disease were very much higher on the eastern than on the western front. The number of British killed is here slightly overestimated; but if the Dominions and India are included, as they should be, and the 33,361 deaths in action in the Navy, the total is about a million. In addition, there were 15,000 deaths in the mercantile fleet, mainly by submarines. The German total is swollen to nearly 2,300,000 if the missing are included among the dead. On the same calculation, the Austrian losses would be raised to over a million and a half; but there were many desertions from the Austrian ranks. In the East, the mortality among prisoners was enormous; very few of the Austrian prisoners taken by the Serbians returned home.

The loss of population caused by the absence of husbands at the front was approximately equal to, but on the whole, slightly greater than the entire military losses. Sir Bernard Mallet calculates that the United Kingdom lost 650,000 births in consequence of the war. In France the loss of births is given as 1,040,000, and in Italy at 1,290,000. In Germany the loss is calculated as close upon three million, and about the same in Austria-Hungary.

The rise in the civilian death-rate in Central Europe has been grossly exaggerated, partly for propagandist purposes (to rouse indignation against the blockade) and partly by the philanthropic societies which were collecting money to relieve distress. In some countries the death-rate, apart from war casualties, was below the average during the war. East says : " The war made little difference in infant mortality in Great Britain. The rates for 1916 were the lowest ever recorded. In Belgium and France the death-rate for infants rose, though not to high figures. In Germany unofficial figures showed no more disturbance than in England for the first four years of the war. In Austria there was a slight but not very significant rise."

In other wars, the line indicating the birth-rate shows a ravine during the war, followed by a hump for two or three years after the peace. In a very short time the war losses, whether due to casualties or to decline in the number of births, are made good. The Great War found almost every European country with a declining birth-rate. The density of population, at the existing standard of living, had almost reached its maximum. Emigration was no longer so easy as when the new countries were nearly empty and willing to admit all newcomers. Accordingly a slight slowing down of the rate of increase had begun, in spite of the rapid decline in

the death-rate due to sanitation and improved medical science. But the shrinkage had not been quite so pronounced as the needs of the European countries demanded; and consequently, the loss of numbers occasioned by the war was in itself an advantage, and there was no subsequent rise in the birth-rate to counteract it, except in the year after the demobilized soldiers returned home. In England, the vast amount of unemployment has brought home to the mind of the public the necessity of restricting the population, and the decline in the birth-rate, which had proceeded almost in a straight line from 1878, when it reached its maximum, to 1914, has begun to curve downwards, though not steeply. In Germany the decline, especially in the towns, seems to have been more rapid; but the birth-rate in Germany before the war was considerably higher than in England or France, and there was also, in the years immediately following the war, a feeling of despondency or uncertainty about the future.

It is really impossible to estimate the loss of life in Russia. Although Russia went out of the war a year before the Armistice, her losses in battle were probably the greatest of all the belligerents, since the unfortunate moujiks were driven like sheep to the slaughter, unprotected by artillery, and sometimes armed only with clubs. Deaths by sickness are always larger in a Russian army; for though the Russian soldier showed in the Japanese war that he can sometimes recover from wounds which would be fatal to men of the western nations, the hospital arrangements in Russia are very defective, and the armies of the east were ravaged by typhus and cholera, which hardly contributed to the death-roll on the western front. A large number died during the famine which followed the war; but the casualties in the civil wars against

the Reds were very small. Judicial murder has reached an extent in Russia which has never been approached before. Whether the executions number two million—the lowest estimate of those who know the facts and wish to speak the truth—or a much larger total, the horrors of the Red Terror far surpass anything that the world had yet seen; and at the time of writing there is no sign that the martyrdom of that vast empire is near its end.

The territorial results of the Great War were on paper very favourable to Great Britain. The area and population of the Empire in 1926 may be estimated as follows :—

| | *Square Miles* | *Population* |
|---|---|---|
| In Europe .. | 121,512 | 48,000,000 |
| In Asia .. .. | 1,824,550 | 333,000,000 |
| In Oceania .. | 3,300,000 | 8,000,000 |
| In Africa .. .. | 4,652,000 | 50,000,000 |
| In America .. | 4,011,720 | 11,094,000 |
| | 13,909,782 | 450,094,000 |

These numbers show that the Empire now occupies more than one quarter of the habitable globe, and contains more than one quarter of its total population. The grandiose proportions of these totals are much reduced when we observe that only seventy million of the population have white skins, and that large parts of Canada and Australia are permanently unfit for colonization, from climatic reasons. But the British Empire remains the largest aggregation of human beings ever united under one central government, a veritable League of Nations in being. The status of different parts of the Empire differs greatly. There is complete self-government in Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Southern Ireland. Almost every unit is financially self-supporting, and since the Imperial Conference began its work, some progress has been made towards making the various parts

of the Empire self-defending. The whole of the Dominions in 1925-6 contributed about eight per cent of the cost of Imperial defence. Besides those territories which have what is called Dominion status, there are others which are governed by a legislative assembly wholly or partly elected, and an executive council nominated by the Crown, or by the Governor as representing the Crown. In this category are most of the West Indian Islands. In other Colonies the governor acts with an executive and legislative Council nominated by the Crown or by the Governor. Such are Ceylon, the Falkland Islands, Fiji, Gambia, Gibraltar, Nigeria, St. Vincent, Sierra Leone, the Straits Settlements, Tanganyika, and Trinidad. In Labuan, St. Helena, and in the native protected States of South Africa, powers are vested in the Governor alone. Outside the area of British possessions in the strict sense there are various protectorates, spheres of influence, and mandatory spheres, within which British authority is exercised in varying degrees, and foreign powers are warned not to interfere.

Something has already been said of the success of the principle of self-government, which has been extended to all those parts of the Empire which are inhabited by men of European descent. It is too early to predict with confidence that this virtual independence will be permanently compatible with membership of the Empire. The strongest tie, in the absence of any coercion, must be self-interest. This motive is strongest in Australasia, where the protection of the home fleet is necessary in the face of probable Oriental ambitions. It is the almost universal belief of Australasians that if Chinese, Japanese, and Hindus were allowed to settle freely in British Oceania, they would undersell and outwork the white population, till the race with a higher standard would find the conditions insupportable.

For this reason their policy is to keep out coloured labour altogether. This policy can only be maintained while it is possible to exclude Asiatics by force. The Chinese and Japanese would emigrate in swarms if they were allowed to land, and the Chinese would soon develop the tropical parts of Australia, which are at present kept back by the price of labour and by fear of the heat. It is not likely that the Commonwealth of Australia will wish to cut the painter when the probable result would be an unsuccessful war with Japan and China. It is probable, however, that if a time ever comes when the British fleet is unable to protect these Dominions, they will endeavour to establish closer relations with the United States. The menace of Colour, or rather of the Asiatic standard of living, is the main preoccupation with all white labourers and farmers who live within range of Oriental immigration.

In the meantime, wise Australians realize that immigration should be encouraged, in spite of the selfish opposition of Labour. "In Northern Australia," says Mr. Hornabrook, "there are nearly a million square miles, with only 10,000 whites, fewer than one would see at a league football match any Saturday afternoon. If we think that the world is going to permit this sort of thing much longer, we must be blind fools." Sir James Mitchell, Premier of West Australia, said in 1922, "I do not believe this Empire will be a safe place to live in fifty years hence unless the population is much larger. If it could be raised to three times its present figure, it would be much better for the Empire." Recent exploration has disclosed that the area of irreclaimable desert is much less than was formerly supposed. We are even told that "rich lands are scattered profusely throughout the continent."—(*Hurd.*) Nor is the tropical climate any bar to colonization.

It is not the heat, but tropical diseases, which keep the white man out of hot countries; and these diseases do not trouble Australia. The real obstacles are the dog-in-the-manger policy of Labour in the Dominions, the unfitness of our degenerate population at home, and their reluctance to emigrate while a grateful country provides them with the means of leading a parasitic existence, battening on the rates and taxes. If we still bred the kind of emigrants who first settled in North America, there would be no need to reduce the birth-rate for another fifty years. Happily, the upper and middle classes still produce a limited number of colonists of the right sort.

In Australia 95 per cent of the white population, and in New Zealand 98 per cent, are of British stock. In New Zealand there are no large towns, and the population, though too scanty, is fairly well distributed. But in Australia 1,800,000 out of less than six million are collected in Sydney and Melbourne, and about 800,000 more in Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and Hobart. The rural population increased by 8.75 per cent between 1911 and 1921, the population of the State capitals by 38 per cent. The congested population of the great towns contains a large number of bad citizens, who pursue the class war in a country where such a thing ought never to have been heard of.

The loyalty of the Dominions, though it showed itself in splendid fashion when the Empire was fighting for its existence, is less whole-hearted than an Englishman could wish. Settlers from other countries are absorbed into the nations which are being developed out of the Colonies, but they become loyal Australians or Canadians rather than loyal citizens of the Empire. The antipathy to the Union Jack, which has lately been shown in South Africa and elsewhere, is made light of at home

though in America disrespect to the national flag would not be considered a small thing. In Australia the Irish element is unfortunately strong, and there is no apparent diminution in the almost insane malignity against England which is the chief bond of union among the Irish wherever they go. Foreign immigrants do not feel themselves to be British, as the few foreign dwellers in French colonies usually feel themselves to be French. In spite of the incapacity of the French as colonists, which has often been exaggerated, it cannot be denied that the bright and genial, if superficial, civilization which they bring makes their rule more acceptable to their subjects than the unsympathetic justice and non-interference which we offer in conjunction with the opportunity to trade and make money.

The future of Canada is problematical. Racially it should be secure for the northern stocks, since the climate is too severe for Mediterraneans, and still more so for negroes. It shares with the United States the immense advantage of access to both oceans, and since the opening of the Panama Canal, the produce of Western Canada can be more cheaply sent to Europe by the "all-sea route." There is nothing impossible in Lord Dufferin's prediction that Canada's ultimate power may exceed the power of Great Britain. But over sixty per cent of the population is included in Quebec and Ontario. The Yukon and the North-West territory contained in 1921 only 12,100 people. The most rapid increase at present is in the three prairie provinces and in British Columbia. Against this increase must be set the disquieting fact that, between June, 1923 and June, 1924, 200,000 Canadians paid poll-tax for admission into the United States. The Canadian Government has begun to advertise for immigrants in France, Belgium, Scandinavia, and even in south-east Europe. We have a million unemployed at

home, but either they will not go, or the Dominion does not want them, while it can get Rumanians and Czechs.

From the military point of view Canada could not be defended against a determined attack by the United States. The majority of the inhabitants certainly value their independence, and their ambition is to be a great, self-governing nation. But the old saying that the last shot fired on American soil in defence of the British connection would be discharged by a French Canadian is more doubtful than it once seemed to be. The French Canadians used to fear that their language, their customs, and, above all, their religion, would be in danger if Eastern Canada were merged in the larger aggregate of a North American Republic. But the number of Irish, Italians, and Poles in the United States is now so great that the Roman Catholic Church is acquiring great political influence, intimidating journalists and politicians, and threatening to interfere with the system of national education. The French Catholics would now have nothing to fear from absorption. There is also a very large number of citizens of the United States who have settled in Canada, and who do not disguise their expectation that the whole continent will one day be brought under their flag. Along her whole frontier Canada has the quick-witted Americans, eager to share in the exploitation of the natural resources of the country. The chief safeguard of Canada is really that it is not the interest of the United States to conquer it. For more than a hundred years England has submitted, for the sake of Canada, to a series of affronts and injuries which would not have been tolerated from any other nation, and we have stood between America and any project of a European coalition. If the British Flag were hauled down on the North American Continent, it is more than possible that

the nations of Europe, enraged by the bloated prosperity and airs of superiority of "the man who won by the War," would combine to draw Shylock's teeth; and Great Britain, after losing Canada, would no longer have any motive to help a nation which, in the circumstances supposed would have finally forfeited its friendship. Nevertheless it is possible that a movement in favour of annexation may spread in Canada, since that country is more and more imitating the civilization and point of view of its powerful neighbour.

South Africa is in less danger of foreign conquest. The main problem there is that of the native races, and there is a constant danger that the humanitarian sentiments of the mother country may cause friction with the white settlers, and especially with the Dutch. The treatment of the Kaffirs, a fine and intelligent race, leaves much to be desired, and it is impossible to justify the avowed policy of the South African Labour Party, to prevent the natives from entering any skilled and well-paid occupations. It does not seem likely that there will be another war between the white races, and the danger from Germany, which was at one time serious, has passed away. The South African Dutch can have no wish to pass under any other European flag.

The future of India lies on the knees of the gods. It is a subject on which it is better not to write without first-hand knowledge. We have always proclaimed that we regard our Indian Empire as a trust for the benefit of the governed, and that we look forward to a time in the future when the Indians may be left to manage their own affairs. To show our sincerity, we have trained the educated natives in the literature of revolt, and have supplied their rhetoricians with choice models of revolutionary oratory. Since the unfortunate date when British politicians began to meddle in Indian affairs, the

doctrinaire democrat has been much in evidence with his shibboleths of self-determination, representative government, and the like. The letters of Lord Morley to Lord Minto, with their House of Commons attitude and their tone of a *faux bonhomme*, showed, in a way that their author was far from realizing, how galling and mischievous dictation from home may be to a Viceroy and his advisers on the spot. The permanent officials are no doubt a salutary check on the politicians; but the danger is great that some Labour Government, utterly ignorant of Indian affairs and worse than indifferent to one of the most glorious chapters in English history, may throw away with both hands the inheritance which has been won by some of the greatest men and noblest characters that our race has produced. The mere advent of a Socialist Government to power would give the signal for disturbances in India which only a strong hand could quell; and the strong hand would not be there. This uncertainty about the future is doing incalculable harm to the British Raj, especially by deterring young men of the traditional type from offering themselves for service in India.

As might have been foreseen, democratic institutions have thrown power into the hands of the most pernicious agitators, and have introduced into Indian life all the worst evils from which we are suffering at home. The Native States are for the most part in a far happier and quieter condition than British India.

A few words will suffice about other parts of the Empire, Burma contains vast natural wealth, and the people are said to be easier to govern and pleasanter to deal with than the Indians. The West India Islands are not relatively so important as they were in the days of slavery, and their output of sugar, their chief product, is insignificant compared

with that of Cuba and Porto Rico, which have thriven portentously under American financial encouragement. The Americans hope to bribe our islands to enter the Union, and offered to take them in part payment of the War Loan ; but the Prince of Wales expressed the views of the colonists as well as of the home population when he declared that "the British Empire is not for sale." "If ever the naval exploits of this country are done into an epic poem," says Froude, "the West Indies will be the scene of the most brilliant cantos. For England to allow them to drift away from her would be a sign that she had lost the feelings with which great nations always treasure the heroic traditions of their fathers."

Rhodesia, which contains 440,000 square miles, has great possibilities, but in 1921 it contained only 36,000 white people. It is a great cattle country, and in parts is well suited to oranges, lemons, tobacco and cotton. There are also large deposits of copper, waiting for a railway to the west coast. Many think that here is a real white man's country, since the great elevation above the sea-level mitigates the heat and makes the climate healthy.

In Nigeria, with 370,000 square miles and a native population of 19,000,000, the natives have been successfully trained in skilled occupations. There is probably no part of the Empire in which the aborigines have profited so much by British rule, and they showed their gratitude by fighting admirably against the Germans in the Cameroons.

Kenya, a new acquisition, has a delightful climate, and the country is well suited for maize, coffee, sisal, and wheat. It is at present a favourite colony with young men of good social position and some capital. Severe criticisms have lately been made upon our administration. It is said that large areas have been assigned to a handful of whites, and that

the natives are harshly treated. Without special knowledge, it would be unfair to express any opinion on this subject.

In British Borneo our occupation has almost stopped the two banes of the country, piracy and head-hunting. The country is very rich in rubber, commercial timber, tobacco, rice, and jungle produce of all kinds. Much the same may be said of British Malaya, which is being developed chiefly by Indian and Chinese labour.

Even this cursory survey of the half-neglected possibilities of our Empire may suggest the reflection that one-tenth of the money wasted on sops to Cerberus at home might greatly augment the national wealth if it were applied to opening communications and improving irrigation in some of the lands just mentioned. We shall probably not realize our opportunities till we have lost them.

The absence of any real Imperial Government is a standing drawback. The British Parliament calls itself imperial, but there is no authority actually supreme in all parts of the Empire. The Crown is nominally supreme ; but in a dispute between two self-governing Dominions, or a Dominion and the Mother Country, the Crown would be constitutionally on both sides. The so-called Imperial Parliament cannot mobilize the resources of the Empire for war. It cannot require any of the Dominions to provide a single soldier or to pay a single shilling. One Dominion may introduce conscription to help the Empire in war ; another may make service voluntary ; a third may even declare itself " neutral," as the Prime Minister of Cape Colony wished to do when the Empire was at war with the Transvaal. The British Parliament cannot control the shipping of the Empire in time of war, though such control is of vital importance. During the Great War, two Canadian ships were transferred to a new American

line, running between the United States and Capetown. Any Dominion may refuse the right of free entry to British subjects, as South Africa closes its doors against East Indians. The Navy is almost entirely supported by the British taxpayer. There is no imperial trade policy. All parts of the Empire legislate separately as seems to suit their own interests. When an Imperial Federation League was founded, practical politicians were afraid to do more than bless the proposal, and the Dominions instructed their representatives to leave it alone.

The practical result is that not only is the Government unable to calculate beforehand on the resources which will be at its disposal in case of war, but membership in the British Empire carries with it no equality of sacrifice. We lost the American colonies because we asked them to contribute a small share to relieve our war debt; and we are now so much afraid of losing our new Empire in the same way, that we shoulder the most crushing burdens without complaint. When all things are considered, it is surprising that we do not hear more often that the Empire is a very expensive luxury. The whole machinery of the Empire is a chaos; it holds together because there is abundance of good will, and not because the gossamer threads which join its parts could bear even the slightest strain. Some real co-operation has been secured; but Federation presents far greater difficulties than those which the Americans, for example, surmounted with such admirable skill.

The loss of Ireland will perhaps be considered in the future to have been the most shameful event in English history. To our own generation it seemed like getting rid of an intolerable nuisance; the very name of Ireland had come to arouse impatience and disgust. Louis Philippe, with more wit than was customary with him, said that Ireland is an incurable

disease, but not a fatal one. Our political doctors have certainly to confess that they failed to cure it, except by amputation. But the failure of their treatment is really humiliating. The inhabitants of the island consisted of a large minority of English and Scottish descent, who now call themselves Irish, though two hundred years ago they would have resented the name. From these families come, almost without exception, the names on the Irish roll of honour, a remarkably brilliant list of soldiers, orators, diplomats, lawyers, divines, men of letters, and captains of industry. The indigenous population, mainly of neolithic or Mediterranean stock, possesses, speaking generally, the engaging qualities, and the deep-rooted moral defects, of the race from which they spring. It should not have been very difficult to govern them firmly, justly, and generously, conceding to them a measure of local freedom. All that was necessary was to make it quite clear to them that they had nothing to gain by sedition, and that all crime, especially when it excused itself by political motives, would be promptly and severely punished. But Ireland, and the Irish loyalists, have been the victims of our system of party politics. If there had been any realization of the seriousness of the question, Ireland would have been taken out of the arena of party strife, and dealt with as an imperial concern, with which faction was forbidden to interfere. But the Irish vote could often turn the scale in Parliament, upsetting a ministry and installing its opponents in power. To bid for the support of the Irish was an important part of the ignoble game played by the Ins and the Outs. There was no consistency in British policy. At one time serious attempts were made to restore order; at another, the word was conciliation, which meant the payment of blackmail to criminals and instigators of crime. The case became nearly hopeless when

it fell into the hands of doctrinaire Liberals, who loved such shibboleths as "Conciliation, not Coercion," and applied them, in the manner of doctrinaires, without discrimination. The Labour Party followed their usual course, and declared themselves in favour of the enemies of their country. The Great War, as a wise statesman might have foreseen, precipitated the catastrophe. The insincere cant about the right of self-determination, which it suited us to use in order to Balkanize the Continent of Europe, came home to roost in the British Isles. It was considered necessary to placate America; and America was quite openly furnishing not only funds, but agitators, murderers, and incendiaries, to aid the rebels. The presence of over eighty malcontents in the British Parliament, ready to support the subversive element in our home population, and the intrigues of the Irish element in the Dominions, were a national danger. So the deed was done. The loyalists, except in the north-east corner of the island, were cynically sacrificed; the civilizing work begun by the Normans was finally abandoned; and three-quarters of Ireland were left to relapse into barbarism under the tutelage of a crafty and tyrannical priesthood.

Apart from the disruption of the British Isles, in what condition has the Great War left the Empire in relation to other countries? It will be found that the events of the last twelve years have been, almost without exception, unfavourable to the position and prospects of this country.

When I was in Berlin three or four years before the war, I had a conversation with a very eminent German publicist, who was my host. I found him strangely oblivious of the danger to Europe from the United States. I tried to represent to him that Europe had perhaps fifty years more of ascendancy before the centre of power and wealth finally moved

across the Atlantic. But, I added, if there is a great European War, we shall sacrifice those fifty years. America will be the *tertius gaudens*, the only real victor. Germany will not keep the sword, nor England the trident. Europe will have committed political suicide. The event has fully justified my prediction. British naval supremacy is at an end, and with it the instrument by which we built up and maintained our Empire. Naval strength depends mainly on national wealth. We are no longer rich enough to build ships against all possible rivals; and the Americans, by insisting on our repayment of the vast debt, incurred for the sake of France, to which we rashly put our names, have secured that we shall remain permanently tributary to themselves, and unable to challenge them on the water. Our Government had practically to choose between accepting Wilson's "point" about the freedom of the seas, conceived in an unfriendly spirit to Britain, and agreeing to a numerical equality between the British and American fleets. They wisely accepted the latter, since the unlimited resources of the United States would make effective competition impossible. Our position as a world-power is thus permanently altered for the worse.

There are no occasions of war between the British Empire and the United States, since our Government invariably gives way. We sometimes even flatter ourselves that on any great moral issue we are more likely to find America ranged on our side than against us. But no such comforting reflections are possible when we turn to our altered position in regard to our nearest neighbour in Europe.

We drew the sword primarily for the sake of Belgium, because it has been a fixed principle of British policy that we cannot allow the harbours of Belgium and Holland to pass under the control of a great military Power. We have fought several wars,

chiefly against France, to prevent this from happening. Now we have been compelled to allow an alliance between France and Belgium, which would place the smaller country at the service of the greater in the event of another war. Thus we have lost a safeguard which we have always deemed of primary importance.

It is unnecessary to tell again the story of the deplorable peace which France imposed, not on Germany only, but on her own Allies. The proceedings at Versailles compare very unfavourably with the much abused Congress of Vienna, mainly because on that occasion England was the predominant Power, and was able to give effect to the principles of moderation and justice, which have always guided British statesmanship after the end of a great struggle. At Versailles France was the predominant partner, and it was her policy, dictated by the implacable Clemenceau, which prevailed. "Clemenceau," says Mr. Keynes, "felt about France what Pericles felt about Athens—unique value in her, nothing else mattering; but his theory of politics was Bismarck's." This, however, is unjust to Bismarck, who never forgot that in this world neither friendships nor enmities are eternal, and that brute force has its limitations. Clemenceau was utterly disdainful of the idealism which Wilson brought to the Conference, and which Lloyd George partially acquired during its progress. Our critics reminded the French that they could not both eat their cake and have it. A ruined Germany could pay no reparations; a Germany which could pay fantastic reparations could not be a weak nation. This dilemma entirely missed the point. The policy of the French was to fix the indemnity at a sum utterly beyond the capacity of Germany to pay. This was to be the excuse for occupying large portions of the most valuable German territory, which also provided

a strong frontier against invasion. The vague and crushing weight of debt would also prevent the economic recovery of Germany. On the other hand, the largest possible sums were to be extorted from the conquered year by year. Although France was less impoverished by the war than any other belligerent, the French refused to pay any part of their debts to their Allies, and imposed no severe taxes on their citizens. Their policy was purely self-regarding, and was the most injurious to Great Britain that could have been conceived, since the interest of England was to bury the hatchet and get back to business. It is no wonder that the Entente between the two countries was strained almost to the breaking point. The French also took pains to ruin the Greeks by concluding a separate peace with Mustapha Kemal in 1921, behind the back of Great Britain. This act of treachery not only occasioned the fall of Lloyd George, but led to the extermination of the Greek-speaking population of Asia Minor, the seat of St. John's "Seven Churches," and the original home of Greek philosophy. This blow at the Christian religion followed, as I hear on private but good information, an abortive attempt by the Vatican to persuade the Ecumenical Patriarch Meletios to make his submission to the Roman See.

The attempt to ruin Germany was at first very successful. Inflation of the currency, the modern equivalent of debasing the coinage, had been resorted to by the Germans as a war measure; but after the peace it got wholly out of hand, till in September, 1923, four million marks were only worth a cent. We may say if we will that this economic Bolshevism was accepted as a means of averting political Bolshevism. It amounted to what in antiquity was called *novæ tabulæ*, an abolition of all debts. All accumulations of capital, including the

war-loans of the Government, were swept away at a blow. The distress of the professional class and the small *rentier* was pitiable; but the abnormal conditions made it easy to sell German goods abroad at very low prices. This was another blow at England; the new Napoleonism in France did not forget Napoleon's Continental System. A combination between the *Comité des Forges*, controlling the iron deposits of Lorraine, and the Westphalian mines, might give France an industrial supremacy as impressive as its military supremacy. Hence the illegal occupation of the Ruhr district, heroically but at last vainly resisted by the stubborn German workpeople. No attempt was made to mitigate the insults and injuries which this aggression caused in Germany. The French had decided that German hatred and the desire for revenge must be accepted as inevitable; with logical ruthlessness they decided to make that hatred impotent. The economic disablement of England which their policy would occasion was a further motive for persisting in it. So a new crop of dragon's teeth was recklessly sown, and a new destruction of the balance of power in favour of one bellicose and intensely ambitious nation was systematically undertaken.

But the new Napoleonism has even less chance of success than the old. The French people are unwilling and perhaps unable to pay for it. The repudiation of debts of honour may ultimately be less remunerative than Napoleon's system of plunder and blackmail. The machine could be kept running only by the complete sacrifice of the *rentier*, and the *rentier* is a large proportion of the French nation. Considering the immense respect paid in France to private property, and the universal habit of making small accumulations with a view to retirement on a modest fixed income, it is astonishing to see how little resistance is made to a capital levy more

sweeping and unjust than has ever been seriously attempted by a Socialist Government. The French Government, it appears, is afraid of the small farmer, who does not care what becomes of the franc, and of the Communist working-man of the towns, who is not sorry to see it collapse; it is not afraid of the despoiled capitalist. But since it is impossible to raise wages to keep pace with the reduced purchasing value of the franc, there is a growing discontent among the wage-earners, which may have serious consequences. The immense power of France at the present moment has a very insecure base.

It may be doubted whether any nation in Europe regretted the temporary disappearance of the Russian colossus from the political arena. The promise of Constantinople to Russia, which we had made during the war, was not altogether agreeable; we had formerly fought, and risked fighting again, to prevent this very thing. But the complete abandonment of Russia by her Allies amounted to a total outlawry of the revolutionary government. Russia was thrust back out of Europe, and became an Asiatic power, as she was before Peter the Great. For the great Russian plain is only nominally European; geographically it belongs to the main continental mass, not to the peninsula which we call Europe. The former Baltic provinces became independent States, Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. These are fairly homogeneous, and may perhaps maintain a precarious independence. But France, again supreme in the councils of Europe, created an enormous new Poland, with no natural or racial frontiers, an empire like the old Austria-Hungary, with all the elements of dissolution in it. As if to make its survival in its present condition altogether impossible, it was allowed to drive a wedge through East Prussia, the most fanatically patriotic part of

the German Empire. The French did good service in helping the Poles to repel a great Red army from the walls of Warsaw; but neither France nor any other power can guarantee the present frontiers of Poland.

The French are said to count on Russia remaining impotent for twenty-five or even fifty years. But this date is probably far too remote. The country is at present ruled by a Directory of fairly efficient and absolutely ruthless Tsars, who employ all the old machinery of repression—wholesale executions, ubiquitous espionage, and daily deportations to Siberia. Industrial and intellectual Russia has been destroyed; but there was not very much to destroy; and rural Russia could be destroyed only by sowing its plains with salt. The peasants have successfully resisted the Red Government. The main result of the largest Communistic experiment in history has been the creation of the largest system of peasant proprietorship—the broadest of all bases for stable Conservatism. The Soviet Government is being driven to a return towards economic sanity; it is by no means certain that we shall not soon see a revival of aggressive imperialism. Nothing can prevent an alliance between Russia and Germany, since the two countries need each other; such an alliance would mean the downfall of undisputed French supremacy on the Continent.

Germany accepted the monstrous and impossible terms of the treaty only under protest. They were not the terms that Wilson had outlined, and were a stultification of all the aims which the Allies had professed during the war. The Germans in adversity showed great dignity and self-restraint. The revolution passed with very little bloodshed, though the next two years were stained with the murders of Erzberger and Rathenau, two of the ablest and most disinterested of German statesmen. The economic

recovery of the country is already well advanced, and the nation is determined by degrees to gain back the splendid position in trade and commerce which it had won before 1914, and which it foolishly sacrificed by making war. Germany has a strong and secure home market, maintaining a great agriculture as well as great industries.

Poland and the "Little Entente" of Czecho-slovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia are protégés of France, aided by French loans issued at a time when France professed inability to pay any portion of her own debts to her Allies, and compelled by France to keep up military forces on a scale relatively gigantic. The main object of this alliance is to prevent the recovery of Hungary—another source of future trouble, since Hungary is intensely patriotic, and smarts under palpable injuries. It is possible that in the face of this threatening position, which may again embroil the Near East in war, Greece and Bulgaria may come to an understanding.

A political philosopher may find in the revival of military dictatorship the most significant of post-war developments. It will be necessary in a later chapter to examine the causes of the breakdown of Democracy over a great part of Europe. Here it is necessary only to refer to possible repercussions on British interests. The war that was to have made the world safe for Democracy has caused more than half Europe to decide that Democracy is not a safe form of government for itself. The question may arise in the near future whether England shall take any active part in preventing a monarchy, or dictatorship, from being restored in Germany, Hungary, and elsewhere. The cause of single-man rule is by no means lost, as some foolishly suppose. But it cannot be denied that this type of government, especially when newly established, is not favourable to peace. It is largely supported by soldiers and

chauvinists ; and it is always difficult to maintain an authority resting on bayonets unless the people can be persuaded that the bayonets are required for some other purpose than to keep them in order. Nevertheless, it cannot be maintained that democracies are always more pacific than monarchies. No nation was ever less threatened than France and the United States are to-day ; and both of them insist on keeping up threatening military establishments, the one an enormous army, the other the largest navy.

That England has laboured earnestly for peace and disarmament cannot possibly be gainsaid. It was mainly for idealistic reasons that we dismantled our splendid air force, thus making it impossible for us to back our counsels of moderation with any threat of coercion. We were faced with a cruel dilemma—either of allowing a policy which was depriving our people of their livelihood, on the morrow of a victory which could never have been gained without us, or of arming to the teeth in response to the preparations—not of Germany but of France.

In looking back over the amazing century during which our great empire was built up, we find that the Europeanizing of the world was by far the greatest thing that happened between Waterloo and August, 1914. Our own nation took the leading part in a sudden expansion of the white races such as the world had never seen before. Thirty years ago it seemed more than probable that the whole earth must soon pass under the military and political power of the whites. The only countries of any importance which remained independent of the European stock were the Turkish Empire, long moribund, the helpless and inert mass of the Chinese Empire, and the still unguessed power of Japan. The tide began to turn soon after, when the

Japanese victories over Russia sent a quiver of hope through the hearts of every nation which the white races had bullied and subdued. It was one of the turning points of history. In my last chapter I shall again refer to the probable outcome of this new determination of the East to assert itself against the West. There is no nation whom this question concerns so vitally as Great Britain, with its Dominions beyond the seas.

It may well be that the historian of the future will name the year of the Second Jubilee of Queen Victoria, or the end of the nineteenth century, or the death of the old Queen, as the culminating point of England as a world-power. Since then, the colossus has tottered. It has been a bad sign that England, in the narrower sense, has not taken her proper place as the predominant partner. We are governed by Scots, Welsh, Irish, and Jews. At the Armistice after the Great War, we were represented by Lloyd George, Bonar Law, Lord Reading, Balfour, Geddes, Haig, Wemyss, and Milner. The genuinely English patriotism of Kipling and Henley is resented. We are no longer Englishmen; we are "Britons." There has been a proposal to alter the name of the Calcutta "Englishman"; it was not, needless to say, the natives who objected to the title. It is a small thing; but it seems to indicate a loss of confidence in ourselves and our destiny. The justification for this chastened mood will appear in the later part of this book. Our whole position has changed radically for the worse; and we are far less able than we were a hundred years ago to contend successfully against adverse circumstances.

The lessons of the Great War are not those which are usually drawn. They are, first, the weakness of half-civilized nations, like Russia and Turkey, in a long struggle. Second, the unexpected strength of industrially ordered communities to withstand a

tremendous strain. Third, the great advantages of a hierarchically ordered, bureaucratic, scientific State like Germany over a chaotic democracy like England. Germany was the first scientific State, and it was nearly too strong for the rest of the world banded to destroy it. Germany had seized the idea that man-power can be grown anywhere, and therefore in Germany itself, on imported food and raw materials. Cobden and Bright also wished to have cheap food and raw materials, but for the sake of cheap exports. Free trade is the policy of the strong, and we had a long start over our rivals. It was this start, rather than free trade, that gave us our temporary ascendancy. But about 1878 Germany began deliberately to build up her man-power by stimulating employment at home. Her scientific tariff aimed at screening imports, so that they should contain a minimum of skilled labour, which was to be supplied in Germany. So successful was this method that emigration from Germany almost ceased before 1900. The penetration of German trade abroad was fostered by subsidies, bank credits, and other devices. Commercial treaties were made with several neighbouring States, which brought them into economic subjection to Germany. Russia, it was hoped, would be the last and largest mouthful. All was thought out. The day of the amateur, with his haphazard methods, is over; and this is not a good thing for England. We were just saved in the war, for which Germany had prepared with scientific calculation, and we not at all, by the readiness of our fleet and by the sacrifice of our professional army, and then only after we admitted the superior genius of the French military school.

Events are not shaping themselves to favour sea power in the old sense. A nation that controls the Black Sea and the Baltic, into neither of which our fleets can penetrate, has the advantage even

by sea ; and our perilously small land base cannot be compared with the great expanses of north-eastern Europe. Russia and Germany, acting together, could control the old world.

Our recent territorial acquisitions are by no means a source of strength. We have annexed large tracts in Africa, mainly to prevent France or Germany from using them as recruiting grounds for black armies. The German colonies in Africa, except perhaps Kenya, were hardly worth taking from any other motive. We should probably have been wiser to leave the Turkish Empire alone, unless, indeed, we were afraid of its being taken by some other European power. Zionism is a romantic idea with which so practical a people as the French would not have meddled. Palestine was not under-populated ; and the Jews who are crowding in under our protection come largely from Russia, where many of the " Jews " are the descendants of a horde of Tartars, converted in a mass in the Middle Ages. As for Mesopotamia, it can be conquered from the north, and will be, if it proves to be worth taking.

Everything points to a coming time of trial for the nation and empire. In the next chapter we must consider how far the internal condition of the country encourages us to hope that we may come through the ordeal with credit.

# CHAPTER IV

## INDUSTRIALISM

In order to understand the internal condition of England at the present time, we have to realize that we are nearing the end of an amazing episode in our history—five generations of unexampled changes, which have revolutionized the whole structure of society, and crowded into one century a social development more drastic in its effects than all that had happened in the long ages which preceded it. That this period of expansion is near to its natural close will be made evident in the course of this discussion. It arose in part out of the unhealthy stimulation imparted to our industries by the Napoleonic War ; its end was hastened by the exhaustion of Europe, including our own country, in the Great War of 1914-18.

At the accession of George III, as Mr. G. M. Trevelyan reminds us, there were no canals, few hard roads, practically no cotton industry, no factory system, few capitalist manufacturers, little smelting of iron by coal ; nor had the conversion of small farms into large made much progress. Changes had begun before 1760, and in the first half of George III's reign they proceeded, more rapidly than before, but not with feverish haste. Only after the outbreak of the French Revolution and the wars with France was the pace accelerated beyond the capacity of statesmanship to cope with it. The " industrial revolution " (the phrase was first used by Toynbee) took place under the unhappiest conditions, when the country was fighting for its life, distracted between revolutionary propaganda and the panic of the governing classes.

Unlike Germany and the United States, England passed through the early and most important stages of the revolution before the invention of railways.

This resulted in a very rapid improvement in the old means of transport, the first step in which was a reconstruction of the roads, under the three great road engineers, Metcalfe, Telford and Macadam. In 1700, it took a week to drive from York to London; in 1815, the time between Leeds and London was only twenty-one hours. In 1824, Manchester had six coaches a day to London, and the journey was done in twenty-four hours. Joseph Aston, in 1816, writes: "In the year 1770 there was only one stage coach to London (from Manchester) and one to Liverpool, and these set out only twice a week. There are now seventy distinct coaches which run from hence, of which fifty-four set out every day, and sixteen others three times in the week, to their different places of destination. In 1754 a 'Flying Coach' was advertised, and boasted that 'however incredible it may appear, this coach will actually (barring accidents) arrive in London in four days and a half after leaving Manchester.' The mail coaches now constantly travel that distance in thirty hours; and on several occasions, when Bonaparte was tottering to his ruin,and on the news of the terminating battle of Waterloo, the Traveller, the Defiance, and the Telegraph coaches came down in eighteen hours."—(*Hammond.*) Commerce profited no less by the substitution of the waggon for the train of pack-horses. At the same period, canal construction was undertaken; in this mode of transport we had allowed the French to get far ahead of us. Some of the large coalowners, like the famous Duke of Bridgwater, took the initiative, and before 1800 nearly three thousand miles of canals had been made. It thus became possible to transport heavy goods otherwise than by sea.

It is not generally known that the French Revolution destroyed a very flourishing industrial development in France. The textile industry especially was

extremely prosperous. The foreign trade of France increased five-fold between 1715 and 1787. Her exports and imports exceeded those of Great Britain, and her population, at the time of the Revolution, was about 26,000,000 against Britain's 9,000,000. At the end of the war France had fallen far behind this country in industries. Germany remained politically and economically medieval till after the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Another result of the industrial revolution is often ignored by those who are determined to see only its bad side. Commerce had hitherto been almost confined to luxuries. In the seventeenth century such articles as pepper, spices and cloves still held a disproportionate importance in the trade with the East. But by the middle of the eighteenth century tea had become a popular drink, even among the poor. Until the seventeenth century sugar was a rich man's luxury; by 1782 the importation had reached 160,000,000 lbs.—(*Hammond.*) Rice was another popular innovation, and cotton became much more important than silk. This cheapening of comforts for the masses has gone on ever since; the difficulty now is that innumerable articles which were formerly unthought of even as luxuries are now considered necessaries, and the resulting complication of life has perhaps brought as much discontent as happiness. "Never perhaps in history," said Fueter, "did people live so improvidently, so carelessly as to the inevitable results of their behaviour, as the industrial peoples of Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century." In the United States, under the unnatural stimulus of war-made wealth, "consumptionism," that is, lavish expenditure on unnecessary comforts and luxuries, has been erected into an ideal.

The Napoleonic War made England the workshop of the world. The two chief British products, coal

and iron, acquired suddenly an enormous importance. Our naval supremacy enabled us to import raw material from every part of the world; only a small proportion of our able-bodied men were called to the colours, while Napoleon, by processes not unlike a slave-raid, was driving 600,000 mixed Europeans to find their graves in Russia. So the great inventors, whose discoveries have been so often described, appeared in the one country which was able to put their ingenuity to the fullest use. At the end of the war in 1815 England was an industrial State, of a type which had never existed before, and it was the only industrial State in the world.

Thus arose an unexampled state of affairs, which brought with it a complete abandonment of traditional ethical ideas about property, and also rendered obsolete the theoretical basis of commercial policy which had been accepted in the eighteenth century. Readers of the Greek classics are familiar with the disparagement of the "money-making life," which was despised by the Greeks, as it still is, or was till lately, by the chivalry of Japan. It was not so much the work of the handicraftsman which was held in contempt as the sordid motives by which producers of all ranks were supposed to be inspired. But Plato and Xenophon had seen just enough of industrialism to dread its results upon physique and character. "The arts that men call vulgar," says Xenophon in the *Oeconomicus*, "are held in disesteem with good reason. They utterly ruin the bodies of workers and managers alike, compelling men as they do to huddle indoors, or in some cases to spend the day before a fire. Then, as men's bodies become enervated, so their souls grow sicklier. And these vulgar crafts involve complete absence of leisure, and hinder men from social and civic life; such men, therefore, are bad

friends and indifferent defenders of their country." Plato dwells more on the morally corrupting influence of trading, and would build his ideal city at a safe distance from a harbour. The middle ages followed classical antiquity in refusing to regard money as a commodity, and in looking askance at usury; money, it was said, is naturally barren. The prevailing opinion in medieval times was that where no risks are involved in lending money, no interest should be charged. It was felt then much more strongly than it was in the last century, that it is immoral to take advantage of another's need, in order to screw money out of him. To charge monopoly prices was not justifiable. There is an *iustum pretium* for everything, including human labour. This principle was acted upon in regulations fixing wages and prices; however unscientific and futile these may have been, we must recognize that they were founded on a moral conviction, which is again beginning to find a voice in our own day.

The simple medieval methods of regulating trade in accordance with equity had ceased to be operative long before the industrial revolution. They were followed by what is usually called the mercantile theory. This theory, though it contained economic fallacies, was based on the intelligible principle, followed with more calculation by Germany in the period before the Great War, that the aim of national policy should be the increase, not primarily of wealth, but of power. In the case of England, this meant naval ascendancy, the accumulation of treasure, and the attempt to make the country self-sufficing. It was not considered good policy to further the prosperity of a foreign rival because he was a good customer. Every increase in the wealth or power of another nation was a possible menace to national security. The strongest position was to have a great store of bullion, and a flourishing

agriculture, by which the whole population could be fed. A large import trade was a misfortune; it tended to create an adverse trade balance. It was fortunate for us that Napoleon shared this fallacy; otherwise he might have injured us much more than he did by his Continental System. The much-abused corn laws were analogous to the artificial encouragement given by imperial Germany to the agricultural interest. In certain circumstances, though perhaps not in the circumstances of England after the industrial revolution, this policy may be the right one. Nor was the desire for a treasure in bullion quite unreasonable. The most modern military states have usually kept a large sum in gold as a war-chest.

The mercantile theory was abandoned of necessity in the era of expansion. Protection had been the logical consequence of its principles. But the doctrines of Adam Smith made headway, and the commercial community, which was beginning to win political power, saw its interest in free trade. As happened again after the Great War, England was anxious to supply goods to other nations, but the Continent was too much exhausted to buy them. We began to desire what under mercantilism had not been desired, the recovery and prosperity of our neighbours. Free trade, as I have said, is the policy of the strong, and at this time England had almost a monopoly of large scale production. Even if our goods were excluded by high duties from some foreign markets, that was no reason for not admitting their goods cheap. Low prices were a benefit to the English consumer, and low costs of production made our superiority as exporters irresistible. So the old idea of legislating for power and economic self-sufficiency was dropped, and in place of it arose the theory that the best course for the nation was to increase its aggregate wealth.

The dangers of this policy were obvious ; a nation which cannot feed itself is highly vulnerable, and one decisive defeat may be fatal to it. But this danger had to be accepted, for the population had already increased so rapidly that it was impossible for England to grow her own food. There were about six millions of people in England and Wales in 1750 ; this number had risen fifty per cent by 1800, and in the nineteenth century it nearly quadrupled itself. The beginning of this great increase coincided with the early years of the industrial revolution. It was thus impossible for England to be self-sufficing ; the path of progress was to stimulate production to the utmost, to keep the cost of production low, to capture new markets abroad, and to pay the necessary insurance by maintaining a navy which no other nation could afford to challenge. It was worse than useless to regulate production by legislation, the effect of which would inevitably be to diminish our power of underselling the foreigner. Meanwhile, the rapid increase of population secured an abundant supply of cheap labour, increased the value of the land, and encouraged mass production for the home as well as for the foreign market.

Many books have recently been written about the condition of the countryman and the town labourer in the nineteenth century. It is not necessary to use the language of denunciation now so popular, though we shall gratefully recognize the real improvement in the condition of what used to be called the labouring classes. We have to remember the dislocation caused by the Napoleonic war, the necessity of building up the prosperity of the country by producing goods at prices which the foreigner could pay, and the great expansion of the English race which was the direct consequence of these conditions. At the present time, urged partly by

humanitarian motives, always potent in England, and partly by the demands of the workers, which they have been increasingly able to enforce, we have sacrificed the dearly-bought advantages which gave us our unique position in trade competition. Our population has come out of the house of bondage, but only to find itself threatened in its very life by its inability to sell its goods in foreign countries.

Let us consider very briefly the changes which have come over the English countryside, and then the growth of the new towns in which the industrial labourer dwelt, and the conditions of his employment.

The village farm is the centre of agricultural history. The present threefold division of profits between landlord, tenant, and farm-labourer came into being by a slow process between the reign of Henry III and the nineteenth century. In the fourteenth century manor land consisted of the landlord's property, the land under co-operative cultivation, and the common pasture with waste land. The meadowland was cut up into lots for hay; after the hay-harvest, which was supposed to be gathered in before the 24th of June, the fences were taken away, and the grass was used as common pasture, till March. The arable land was usually divided into three great fields. There was a compulsory rotation of crops—wheat or rye; then barley, oats and beans; then a year of fallow. At that time roots were not cultivated, and the potato, an American plant, was unknown. Each partner in the parochial communal property had strips in each of the three great fields. After the harvest, the livestock was turned on to the meadows. These animals narrowly escaped starvation in the winter, and were very often slaughtered and salted while they still had flesh on their bones.

Most of the partners were tenants of the landowner, on various terms. In the fourteenth century

the majority were making a fixed payment in lieu of the serf labour which they were bound to give on the lord's land. The country was prosperous, especially after the Black Death thinned the population ; the rural labourer and his family were amply fed. There was a large class of small freeholders or yeomen, who supplied the English armies with the incomparable archers who won nearly all the battles under the Plantagenets. In 1688 it was estimated that there were 40,000 families of freeholders of the higher class, 140,000 families of small freeholders, and 150,000 tenant farmers ; but under the Plantagenets the " yeomanry " probably contained a much larger proportion of " free tenants." The lord of the manor was the owner of the waste, subject to common rights ; he could claim sand and gravel, and any minerals that might be found beneath the soil.

Each community was self-supporting. Increase of population was prevented partly by migration, for in the towns the deaths probably always exceeded the births, and partly by late marriages.

It is plain that this system prevented any improvements, and provided insufficiently, against exhaustion of the soil. There was also great waste of time in walking from one strip to another. The prosperity of the fourteenth century was followed by a period of distress under the Tudors.

There were two great periods of enclosures, the first between 1485 and 1560, and the second between 1760 and 1820. The earlier change was made necessary by the growth of sheep-farming and the wool industry ; this was incompatible with communal cultivation. The landlords, who had lost many of their labourers through the Black Death, naturally welcomed this new way of supporting themselves, and soon found that farming under these circumstances might be a source of wealth.

They were severely censured by public opinion, but unreasonably according to our ideas. Sir Thomas More in the reign of Henry VIII complained that the sheep "consume, destroy and devour whole fields, houses and cities. One covetous and insatiable cormorant and very plague of his native country may compass about and enclose many thousand acres of ground within one pale or hedge; the husbandmen be thrust out of their own; or by wrongs and injuries be so wearied that they may be compelled to sell all." At a time when labour could not easily transfer itself to a new industry, great hardships may have occurred. But "the process of enclosure came to an end in the reign of Elizabeth, with the practical equalization of the profit from tillage and from pasture, associated with the development of convertible husbandry. Much of the country remained unenclosed, and was worked under the old system."—(*Innes.*)

In the second period between 1760 and 1820, there was an agricultural revolution parallel with the industrial revolution. Great improvements in agriculture were being introduced, which encouraged large farms owned by capitalists who wished to make them pay. Roots, new grasses, stall-feeding, and better manure greatly added to the yield of the soil. The gradual dispossession of the small farmer was an inevitable result of economic changes. The process was greatly accelerated by two other causes, the industrial revolution and the wars with France. The former killed the small home industries which for the yeoman made all the difference between modest comfort and poverty. The latter made it absolutely necessary to turn the soil to the best account. Goldsmith describes the change in his *Deserted Village* and predicts disasters to the land "where wealth accumulates and men decay." But though the loss of the yeomanry was a heavy price for the nation to

pay, and though much wrong was done in isolated cases, there is no evidence of wholesale injustice on the part of the landlords. No generosity could have saved the yeoman under the altered conditions of the time.

During the Napoleonic War the cost of food trebled. From the peace to about the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign was a hard time for the poor. There was a great deal of unemployment and some over-production in the factories. The workers, both in town and country, were demoralized by the "Speenhamland" system of doles out of the rates, which has been unsparingly condemned by all economists and politicians, until the recurrence of similar conditions after the Great War led to an application of a similar remedy on a still more disastrous scale. During the war, every acre of land capable of cultivation was brought under the plough. When foreign supplies again became available, complete disaster would have overtaken the whole industry, but for the Corn Law of 1815. As it was, rents fell by nine million pounds in the year after Waterloo. It is true that the landlords had exceptional opportunities of getting their own grievances attended to, but the burden of the rates was a heavy set-off to their prosperity. After the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 had relieved the rates the repeal of the Corn Laws could not be long resisted. The fears of the agriculturists that the free import of food would ruin British agriculture, were not at all unreasonable; but the results were masked at first by the rise of prices which followed on the discovery of gold in California and Australia, and by the Crimean War. Costs of farming were also reduced by new machinery.

The fears of the landed interest were thus partially assuaged, and many landlords grew rich on ground-rents, obviously augmented by the cheap food and

growing trade which stimulated increase of population. The country generally prospered amazingly, and a generation of national self-complacency congratulated our countrymen on the superior intelligence which had led them to abandon protection. But about 1877 a period of acute agricultural depression set in. Farms were abandoned, rents fell, and many landlords regretted the size of their mansions, erected or enlarged when no fears were felt for the future of their class. The chief cause was the low price of foodstuffs, which poured in from the new countries, where farming was conducted on a large scale, cropping the virgin soil year after year, and economizing by using very few labourers. Since then the history of British agriculture has been a tragedy. The condition of the farm labourers has certainly improved from the very low standard of seventy years ago; but the old village life has not returned, nor the old home trades. The old handy man of the countryside is gone. The village labourer now is too often listless and inefficient, the least capable and ambitious member of a family which has sent its brighter specimens to the towns. There has been a flight of the young and vigorous from the dying villages. Those who remain are still in a semi-servile relation to the farmers, and exhibit the servile qualities of suspicion, reticence, and sullen patience. Many of our villages are obviously parasitic and unnatural. Their centre is a great house, inhabited in most cases no longer by the family of the old squires, but by some newly-rich man, who treats it as a plaything, and spends in the village money made elsewhere. Since the war the destruction of the squirearchy, attacked by vindictive taxation, has been almost complete. In some districts not one old family remains. The farmers, after a few fat years when prices were inflated, are unable to pay their labourers enough to

make work on the land attractive. The only hope for agriculture seems to be that the time is not far distant when the new countries will no longer have food to export, and that is not a cheerful prospect for England.

The changes in agriculture would have run their course, not exactly the same course, if there had been no industrial revolution in the more limited sense. The growth of the new manufacturing towns is one of the outstanding features of modern social history. In the earlier half of the nineteenth century it was the theme of jubilant self-congratulation, mingled with furious denunciation from a few eminent men of letters, who found the rôle of the prophet Jeremiah congenial to their temperament. At the present day there is a widespread opinion that civilization under the influence of the new inventions took a wrong turn, and that the twentieth century has to liquidate an evil legacy of almost insoluble problems. The error is often ascribed to a false ideal, under which human beings were treated as the cannon-fodder of industry, and their welfare sacrificed to the fetish of production. A more scientific view would be that the nineteenth century was a period of unparalleled achievement and real greatness along certain lines ; but that development on those lines had its necessary limit, which has now been almost reached. The period of re-adjustment which lies before us is likely to be one of great suffering and temporary decline. We may look back wistfully to the eighteenth century, that period of stability and relative contentment, when literature, architecture, furniture, and even religion reflected a civilization which had found itself and desired no drastic changes. Such periods recur from time to time in history, when society is poised in stable equilibrium. They are pleasant to live in, but they never last long. The twenty-first

century may conceivably enjoy this kind of repose; a very different fate is reserved for us and our children.

We must now turn to the changes due directly to the growth of manufactures. The new industries required, quite suddenly, a very large supply of hands to work them. These were, after a time, supplied by migration from the country, by the children of the first urban workers, and by a swarm of Irish. But at first the need was met by the employment of children in the mills. The use of young children as labourers was no new thing in England. Locke suggested that they should begin work at three; Defoe rejoiced to see that in the busy homes of the Yorkshire clothiers "scarce anything above four years old, but its hands were sufficient for its own support."—(*Hammond.*) But machinery offered new opportunities for putting children to work. Economists, employers, and the parents of the children were equally callous to the cruelty of the system. Bentham thinks that "we need dread no more the multiplication of man, now that economy has shown by what secure and imperishable means infant man, a drug at present so much worse than worthless, may be endowed with an indubitable and universal value." The London workhouses sent out their pauper children in waggon-loads to feed the mills. A mill owner horrified Southey by telling him calmly that a great proportion of them would never reach the age of twenty. The parish was glad to get rid of them for ever, and the manufacturers used them up without much scruple. After a few years, however, the main supply consisted of the children of local working men, who sent them voluntarily into this slavery almost as soon as they could walk. Some parents were naturally more tender of their children's welfare; but in most cases a child was an asset, to

add to the family budget. A most objectionable law forbade a man to receive parish relief if he had children whom he might send to work. Sometimes he could not live without parish relief, which under the Speenhamland system was a regular dole in augmentation of wages; but it is not true that wages were always low. The spinners in 1833 were well paid, and Hannah More found (about 1791) in the cottages of the Mendip glassmakers "the wages high, the eating and drinking luxurious, one, if not two, joints of the finest meat roasting in each of the little kitchens."—(Hammond, *The Town Labourer*, pp. 12, 227.) This kind of barbarism was reported among the miners during the Great War and after, when wages were inflated. It was probably not true of any large class of workmen after 1815. The evidence is abundant that wages were, as a rule, below the limit which the industry would bear. The manufacturers, many of whom became very rich at this time, hardly ever came from the upper classes. In the first generation the mill-owner was usually a working man who had raised himself by qualities among which humanity and consideration for others hardly found a place. There is no need to repeat the oft-told tale of the cruelties inflicted on children, some of them little more than babies, in the mines and by the chimney sweepers. The abolition of child labour was imperatively demanded on moral grounds, and it did far less damage to British manufacturers than had been expected. Another evil which was abolished after many efforts was the truck system, by which the workman was obliged to take part of his wages in goods supplied from a shop under the control of the masters.

If these and other manifest evils had appealed more strongly and less tardily to the conscience of the legislators, there might have been no need to

repeal the Combination Laws, which treated as conspiracy any concerted action to alter wages. The laws forbade combination among masters as well as men ; but in fact the masters combined freely, while the law was harshly exercised against similar action by the workmen. The Combination Laws were repealed in 1824, mainly through the exertions of Francis Place, one of the most remarkable champions of the labouring class. Place was a strong anti-socialist, and resisted legislation calculated to hamper the capitalist ; but he believed that laws in restraint of combination were as unscientific as laws in restraint of trade. He even supposed that if the laws were repealed the Trade Unions would melt away. Here he was, of course, completely mistaken. The repeal of the laws was in fact followed by an epidemic of strikes ; and we are now awake to the terrible danger of allowing the Union leaders to organize wars, not against the employers but against the nation, with absolute impunity. Posterity will wonder what meaning can be attached to the word conspiracy, if it does not cover such revolutionary plots as the General Strike in the spring of 1926. In other ways Place was more far-seeing. He wished the labouring class to restrict its numbers, in order that the supply of workmen might no longer be in excess of the demand. This advice, however, was not likely to be followed, while the old poor law gave a bounty on each child at the expense of the rate-payer. The bounty, no doubt, was hardly more than what the ratepayer to-day has to pay for the education of his neighbour's children ; but it was given in a manner which acted as a positive incentive to procreation. It was said of a young woman with four illegitimate children, " When she has another, she will be quite well off." When the old poor law was repealed in 1834, the employers soon began to pay a living wage for efficient labour.

The first of the Factory Acts was passed in 1802. It applied to the treatment of apprentices in the cotton and wool trades, and attracted little attention. In 1819, children under nine were forbidden to work in cotton mills, and a twelve hours day was prescribed for those under sixteen. In 1825, work on Saturday was curtailed to nine hours. These Acts were mainly supported by the Tories, as the agitation for free trade was stimulated by the Whigs. Both parties were pledged to defend private property, but one represented the supposed interests of land, the other of commerce. In 1833, a more important piece of legislation followed, which is often called the First Factory Act. Government inspectors were appointed; children under nine were not to be employed at all, except in silk mills; children under thirteen were not to be employed for more than forty-eight hours in the week; young people under eighteen for not more than sixty-nine hours. There was no legislation for adults. Two years later, women were brought into the same class as young persons, and in 1847 a ten hours bill for all workers alike was carried. The employers were afraid that these provisions would injure the foreign trade of the country; it appears that they were wrong, and the humanitarian argument for the Act was irresistible. It is obvious that there is a point where shorter hours mean inevitably a reduction in output. That point was not reached in 1847; it has been reached since.

These reforms did not touch all trades. Some years later we hear that in the brickmaking trade twenty thousand to thirty thousand children were employed between three or four and seventeen years old. George Smith of Coalville has said that at the age of nine he was employed in continually carrying forty pounds of clay on his head, almost without a break, for thirteen hours a day. One night after his customary day's work he was compelled to carry

one thousand two hundred nine-inch bricks from the maker to the floor where they harden. The distance traversed was quite fourteen miles, seven of which were travelled with eleven pounds of clay in his arms, and for this labour he received sixpence.—(*Escott.*) The abuses in the mines were first dealt with in Lord Ashley's bill of 1842, and again, on a petition from the miners, in 1850.

It is unnecessary to follow the further steps of State intervention. More and more, legislation was demanded by the Trade Unions, instead of being left to philanthropists like Lord Shaftesbury. After about 1880, a slackening in the industry of the operatives became manifest. It could no longer be said, as a Frenchman once remarked of English workmen, "Ils travaillent acharnément." Under the old guilds, a slack workman was called "a mean-spirited workfellow"; now an energetic toiler was liable to have the same epithet thrown upon him by his mates. Carl Peters notices the almost universal dislike of hard work which was beginning to infect the British working class. Together with this change, the strange apathy which Francis Place noticed among the labourers in 1810 was displaced by an aggressive and bitter class-consciousness. It was no isolated phenomenon that the manifestations of acute discontent followed, not coincided with, the time of serious abuses.

Trade unionism, which was called into existence by the helpless condition of the labourer, who no longer had any property in the means of production, and little hope of legislation while *laissez faire* was the accepted economic doctrine, is itself a legitimate development of *laissez faire*. Combination has always been considered a legitimate trade manœuvre, and the workmen could not logically be denied the right to secure a monopoly value for their skill and bodily strength, while a similar policy was notoriously

followed by their employers. For a long time the Unions were so weak that impatient spirits began to distrust them, and to work towards revolutionary Socialism. But the year of revolution on the Continent (1848) produced in England only the abortive Chartist movement, and a generation of comparative quiet and apparent contentment followed.

The later history of strikes belongs not to the history of industrialism, but to revolutionary Syndicalism, which will be dealt with in the next chapter. As has happened in many other cases, the attempts at militant agitation among the workmen command the sympathy of the impartial historian while they were weak, and have ceased to do so now that the Trade Unions have become strong enough to menace society generally and defy the authority of Parliament. A very crucial turning-point was reached in 1906, when under pressure from organized Labour Parliament conceded the inviolability of the corporate funds of the Unions, thus leaving the public at the mercy of any destructive policy which their leaders might think fit to adopt. This was the result of a trial of strength between the Unions and Parliament, in which the legislature had to acknowledge a disastrous defeat.

The co-operative movement, which was re-born in 1844, with the ardent support of Kingsley, Maurice, Neale and Hughes, has had an almost wholly beneficent career. Its modern form is industrial co-partnership or profit-sharing, in which the workers manage their own concerns without paying any "tribute to idle capital." The opposition of the modern Trade Unionist to this system is one of the most sinister features of the whole industrial situation. Instead of buying shares in the business, the working man now prefers to subscribe to a huge "war-fund" which may enable him periodically to

hold to ransom not only the industry but the community.

Meanwhile, the upper and middle class taxpayer has been heavily mulcted in paying for national education, which becomes a more onerous burden every year, and in doles and pensions from which he derives no direct benefit whatever. This is a kind of substitute for socialistic confiscation of capital, and may be regarded as a ransom which a class politically powerless has to pay for permission to enjoy the remainder of its income.

The fears of the employing class in the middle of the last century, like those of the farmers, were justified, but they were not realized so soon as had been expected. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the profitable monopoly which England had enjoyed after Waterloo no longer existed. The economic organization of industry on a world-wide basis, which made the most important nations of Europe partially dependent on food and raw materials brought from abroad, and exchanged for the manufactures of the country which needed the food, was the logical development of the process which England was the first to inaugurate. The great and unparalleled increase of population in these countries was possible only because there were still large and almost unpeopled tracts of fertile land in the new countries, where food could be raised very cheaply and imported into Europe in large quantities. The discovery of cold storage of meat made it possible to convey not only cereals, but beef and mutton even from the Antipodes. But these new lands soon began to be filled up by immigration, so that the amount of food available for export diminished. The necessaries of life at home became dearer, and the competition for foreign markets between the over-populated nations became more severe. Luxuries and comforts were, for a time, still fairly cheap ; but

life was becoming harder and more anxious, especially in those classes where elderly people, whose lives were prolonged by improved hygiene, blocked the path of the young. Other nations, especially Germany, which in 1850 did not possess a single large factory, began to compete successfully with England. German industry and frugality had long been proverbial; these qualities were now at the disposal of the first really scientific State that the world has seen.

The inevitable change for the worse in the position of England was accentuated by the change already referred to, which was coming over the national character. The Englishman under Queen Victoria had been moral, steady, industrious and thrifty; the tone was set by the ideals of the middle classes. admirably represented by the old Queen herself, But now the power was passing from those who had something to lose to those who thought that they had something to gain. Economy in public expenditure gave way to an extravagance which became ever more reckless as the democracy realized that the whole burden might, for a time at least, be laid on the shoulders of the few. Thrift and self-reliance were despised by a class which could help itself to what it wanted out of the rates and taxes. The logical result of this slackening of energy, and this wild improvidence, would be a return to protection, an issue which for half-a-century had seemed to be entirely dead in England. But the attack led by Joseph Chamberlain upon the free-trade citadel was repulsed, and when fifteen years or so later it was repeated, the threat of the dear loaf prevailed over the desire to penalize foreign imports. It remains to be seen whether the Labour Party will end by becoming protectionist; it is not altogether improbable, especially if Syndicalism gains the victory over State Socialism.

The purchasing power of wages ceased to rise about

the beginning of the century, and in the years before the Great War discontent among the working class was becoming general. A revolutionary strike had been prepared for the autumn of the year when the war broke out. The figures for the first years of the new century are affected by increased gold-production and by the inflation in the South African War ; but on the whole the accession of Edward VII about coincides with a check to trade expansion.

" Averaging the trade of each of the five leading rivals during the two decades, 1891-1900 and 1910-1920, brings out emphatically the relative gain made by Germany. Britain's average total in the former decade was about 3,900 million dollars, which was increased to an average of 4,200 in the second period, a gain of 7.6 per cent. Germany on the other hand gained 63.5 per cent, having raised her annual average from about 2,000 million dollars to 3,270 million. The United States increased its annual average from 1,830 to 2,840 million during the same period, or 55.1 per cent. The French gain was from 1,545 to 3,060 million (98.7 per cent) an impressive evidence of her economic recovery from the defeat of 1870, and the Dutch from about 1,200 to 1,850 million (52 per cent). In other words, all Britain's rivals were going forward far more rapidly than she, though none was yet threatening her pre-eminence."—(Julius Klein in *These Eventful Years*.)

The economic consequences of the Great War are a subject full of pitfalls. For example, Sir Josiah Stamp in 1922 says that " although the aggregate of British individual wealth has moved from 11,000 millions in 1914 to about 15,000 millions in 1920, the increase in real or intrinsic values is almost negligible." At present, England is still said to be the richest nation *per capita* of the population, with the exception of the United States, which has a long lead, and its satellite Cuba. Australia, Canada

and New Zealand come next in order, then Uruguay and Belgium. But the distribution of wealth has altered greatly. In 1800 the gross national income was reckoned at 190 millions, and the gross income from agricultural land at 42½ millions; in 1922 the numbers were 2,600 millions and 43½ millions. In the interval very much capital had been spent in improving estates. At present, the landlord may get 3½ per cent on money spent on equipment; for the use of the productive powers of the land he now gets next to nothing.

In the fifteen years before the war, wages in the better-paid industries rose slightly more than prices, but the lower ranks of labour did not profit by this, and, as has been said, suffered a slight but perceptible setback. During the war, prices and wages rose portentously, both because of the interruption of the means of supply and the withdrawal of millions from productive work, and also in consequence of the currency inflation. England suffered far less than most of the other belligerents from inflation, which in parts of the continent reached such monstrous dimensions that the peoples had to revert to barter instead of using the almost worthless government paper. The effect of this reckless inflation in Germany, France, and other countries has been equivalent, as I have said, to a very ruthless capital levy, or to a repudiation of by far the greater part of the State debts. From this fate we were saved by exceedingly drastic taxation of the higher incomes, on a scale for which there was no precedent in history.

Professor A. L. Bowley gives the index numbers of general wholesale prices, compared with 100 in the year before the war, as follows. The maximum, 295, was reached in 1920; since then there has been a decline, very rapid at first, to 188 in 1921, since then slower and fluctuating. In 1923 the figure was 150. In other countries the figures for 1920, the

year of maximum inflation, are: Norway, 377; Sweden, 359; France, 512; Italy, 624; United States, 226; Canada, 248. In Germany, where inflation reached insane proportions after improvement had begun elsewhere, the figure for 1923 was 1,940,000. More recently, the franc in France has collapsed very seriously, though not to such an extent as this. In the summer of the present year (1926) it was quoted (on July 13) at 197 to the pound sterling. Germany and Austria have succeeded or nearly succeeded in stabilizing their currency, and at the time of writing seem to be in a more wholesome financial condition than France.

The question whether real wages have gone up in consequence of the war is very complicated, and I have neither the competence nor the space to discuss it. There was a brief period of great prosperity for the working man after the armistice; it reached its maximum in the latter part of 1920. For some time the rate of wages was maintained in spite of falling prices; but there was a sharp fall in 1922. Professor Bowley thinks that "at the end of nine years (towards the end of 1923), real wages have returned to their original level, but the working class has secured for the present the advantage of increased leisure." This statement, however, surely needs some qualification, for the wages of unskilled labour (it would be wrong, though it is usual, to include agricultural labour in this category) have certainly advanced, and in some cases are actually higher than those in skilled occupations, such as engineering. There has, in fact, been a levelling up, corresponding to the severe levelling down in the "black-coat" professions, which has even touched some of the higher mechanics. The engineers especially have reason to think that they are underpaid.

Mr. Lothrop Stoddard, in a brilliant survey of

post-war conditions in Europe (*Social Classes in Post-War Europe*, June, 1925) begins with a valuable study of the rivalry between town and country. In every industrialized nation, he says, the contrast between the new town and the old countryside strikes the eye. The town, whether in Europe or America, is essentially modern with the same comforts and conveniences and the same air of congested activity. But the country, in most parts of Europe is essentially unchanged. The peasant has not been absorbed into the industrial system. But rural Europe, at any rate on the Continent, is not only not industrial, it is anti-industrial. Urbanization has re-acted unfavourably on agriculture in general, except in France, where an exceptionally thrifty peasantry has managed to hold its own. Rural handicrafts have been displaced by urban mass-produced manufactures; and almost everywhere the country has been reduced to a tributary relationship to the city. In England especially, the country and its interests have been sacrificed.

The war has altered the balance in favour of the country. Agriculturists for a time made large profits, and wherever revolutionary movements occurred, the country folk became conscious of an antagonism of interests. In Russia, indeed, the social overturn was only made possible by an alliance between the peasantry and the workmen; but as soon as the moujiks had seized the land, they wanted no more revolution, least of all on communistic lines. In Russia and throughout continental Europe the peasantry lined up against the revolutionaries. In Russia they refused to supply the towns with food in exchange for worthless paper. They starved out the communists at Munich, defeated the Red army in Finland, suppressed Bela Kun in Hungary, and cowed the workmen at Zürich. " The peasant troops in Switzerland were ready to

go at any mob that formed, and were terribly disappointed that there was no fighting." All over the east of Europe the new "green" party seems likely to control the situation and to re-establish order. In Russia this will almost certainly be the end; for Russian industrialism has committed suicide, and the towns are shrinking, while rustic industries are again busy.

But if continental Europe was only saved from revolution by the peasantry, it is plain that we in England are in a more precarious state. For we have no peasantry, and our country is more completely urbanized than any other land, except, perhaps, Belgium. The consideration is not a pleasant one, and combines with other symptoms to cause great anxiety for our future among some shrewd observers.

Mr. Stoddard confirms the view that the urban working class till the end of the last century enjoyed a far more comfortable and pleasurable life than had ever been within the reach of their ancestors, but that the tide showed signs of turning after 1900. He also notes that in England, though not on the continent, the trade union overshadows the political labour party. "The years just before the Great War were troubled times, in which strikes, violence, and revolutionary agitation became more and more the order of the day." The war restored industrial prosperity by its great demands on industry; but the stimulus was entirely factitious, and the hopes aroused in the minds of the workers, and encouraged by the reckless promises of foolish politicians, could never be realized. The only remedy for the grievous depression which followed the peace was increased production and universal self-denial; but the workers were in no mood to listen to economic lectures, and resisted all attempts either to increase their output or to lower their wages to their actual earnings.

Even the appalling object-lesson of Russia failed to recall them to sanity. Hence a terrible situation came about, from which no deliverance is at present in sight.

The author next reviews the deplorable condition of the middle classes and of the learned professions. He says quite truly that no section of the community showed such splendid and self-sacrificing patriotism as the middle class in all the belligerent countries. They contributed their all to the war loans; they enlisted at once, and as officers paid a double toll of casualties to the War-Moloch; and the non-combatants among them did every kind of useful service at home. Their reward has been to be more cruelly mulcted than any other class. As Mr. Masterman says: "The British middle classes gaze on the terrible increase of prices with rising despair. They can do nothing to remedy it, and feel like rats caught in a trap. They are tightening their belts to face a semi-starvation of their standard of life. They are far more badly hit than the working man by the immense increase in prices. So complete has been the social overturn in England that British municipalities pay scavengers and street cleaners more than school teachers, while no unskilled trades unionist would be allowed to accept the salary of an average clergyman or insurance agent, and in the great newspaper offices the linotype compositor who prints the paper can afford to despise the income of the journalist who writes the paper." These words were written not long after the end of the war, and would be exaggerated if applied to conditions in 1926, but they are still not very far from the truth. The same story might be told in France and Germany.

The effect of a great war is always to injure the higher branches of intellectual work. The scholar and savant are not indispensable when a country

is down on its beam ends, and the artist finds his work unsaleable. But the sufferings of the intellectuals have been greater in France than in England, and greater still in Germany, where there is a genuine fear that the splendid contributions of German brains and industry to intellectual and scientific progress may no longer be possible. In England we can only say that the golden age of the upper middle class, who in the nineteenth century enjoyed great good fortune, has now come to an end. Trollope's novels remain as a monument of a period to which many look back with wistful eyes.

The British revenue rose from 198 millions in 1914 to 899 millions in 1919, exclusive of local taxation. Nearly the whole of this crushing burden was laid on the shoulders of the income-tax payer. About one-sixth of the population paid about five-sixths of the taxes. Not only were the rich mulcted of fully one-half of their income, but when an estate passes by death, the State confiscates anything up to forty per cent of the value. This taxation is not only quite unprecedented; it can be justified only on the assumption that the State has a right to use its power to take from one class and give it to another. For a large part of the revenue is devoted not to paying the interest on the war-debt, but to improving the financial condition of the poorer classes by doles, pensions, and exemptions of every kind. It has generally been supposed, from Plato and Aristotle downwards, that a democracy will always pillage minorities; and it is plain that to-day nothing really interests the working class politician except attacks on private property. The result is that the pleasant and cultivated life of the old squirearchy, whose country houses and parks are among the few beautiful things which we have to show to a foreign visitor, will soon be only a

memory. The squires were beginning to decay before the war; the war has definitely sealed their doom. The larger class of moderately-wealthy men, living partly on their savings and partly on the interest of capital, has also fallen on evil days.

Nevertheless, British war-finance justly earned the admiration of foreign observers. The country staggered, but did not fall under such a load as no nation had ever borne before. Indeed, the Great War proved the enormous strength of our industrial régime. Under no other system could the war have been financed for half the period of its actual duration. Under no other system could the ship have weathered the storm. Germany also showed great power of bearing a tremendous strain; but on Germany the harsh treatment by the Allies after the armistice brought inevitable disaster. France at first seemed to have kept her head above water, and it was expected that the most thrifty of nations would gradually replace its lost wealth. But the people had been buoyed up with extravagant hopes of reparations; militaristic schemes in Europe and Africa ran away with much money; and the reluctance of the Frenchman to pay taxes obliged the government to adopt a radically unsound financial policy, for which the price must now be paid. Hitherto the achievement of Great Britain in escaping bankruptcy has been truly remarkable. The danger is that the unreasonableness of the trade unions may plunge us into the ruin which the patience of the heavily-burdened taxpayer had almost enabled us to escape.

It has been often repeated that the nineteenth century solved the problems of production, leaving the problem of distribution to the twentieth. It is true that from the accession of George III to the death of Victoria the people of England did what any other virile and energetic people would have

done. They seized the unique opportunity of making England the workshop of the world, the wealthiest and one of the most powerful among the nations. Our amazing prosperity was built almost entirely on two foundations—cheap production, and coal, both of which have now failed us. The inevitable effects of this change will be considered later. Here I wish to discuss the violent indictments which are frequently brought against the present distribution of wealth in England.

In dealing with the problem of poverty, the distinction is often forgotten between the genuine workpeople, who form an essential part of the structure of society, and the large class of "submerged" who, from the economic and other points of view, are a deadweight upon the community. This class comprises all the waste-products of civilization, invalids, feeble-minded, the vicious and criminal, all who, from one cause or another, cannot or will not make good. Under any system of government whatsoever, these persons, if they are allowed to exist, must be a charge upon industry. They are a nuisance, like the small and less mischievous class of idle rich at the other end of the scale; but they may be neglected in considering the problems of the distribution of wealth.

It is very desirable that this question should be taken out of the region of rhetorical declamation, and studied with close attention to ascertainable fact. To do this is not difficult, since accurate statistics exist. I will take first the valuable study of Professor Bowley for the United Kingdom in 1911. The aggregate income of the population was £2,090,000,000 of which nearly 200 millions were received as interest on foreign investments. Omitting these, 55 per cent of the remainder was earned by those whose incomes were below £160. Annuities, pensions, &c., bring the incomes under

£160 a year to an aggregate of £1,154,000,000. Of the remaining £742,000,000, £390,000,000 represents profits from professions and trades, £130,000,000 salaries of persons with more than £160; £144,000,000 come from the ownership of buildings, £34,000,000 from land; with other minor items. Persons liable to income tax numbered 1,150,000; those who paid super-tax (which then began at £5,000 a year) were 13,580.

"The spendable wealth of the nation," says Dr. Bowley, "has been grossly exaggerated." Before the war, the average family income was about £153, and from all the higher incomes must be deducted the large demands of the State for rates and taxes. The real income of a working man is considerably *more* than what he receives in wages, for he draws from the public funds, for free education, unemployment dole, old-age pensions, and the like, far more than he pays in. The larger incomes, on the other hand, are heavily reduced by taxation. It is thus demonstrated that even if the national income could be preserved intact after being pooled, which it certainly could not, the skilled labourer would have nothing to gain by the operation, and a high standard of living for all alike is out of the question. Although it is no part of my subject in this volume to pass moral criticisms, it seems plain that a man who has the public ear, whether he be lay or clerical, can hardly do his country a worse service than by fomenting discontent, uttering declamatory denunciations of a state of society which he describes as "intolerable," and holding out hopes which a little intelligent study would show to be wholly chimerical.

More recent estimates than Dr. Bowley's are available, but I give them with some reluctance, since figures relating to the years of inflation are very misleading. In 1920, there were 46,886 incomes between £2,000 and £5,000, 15,904 between £5,000

and £10,000, and 4,502 between £10,000 and £15,000. The larger incomes, those of the very rich, numbered 5,093. There is no doubt that at present these large figures have been much reduced ; many of the war fortunes melted away like snow when prices fell. It may be interesting, and possibly useful as a parallel to movements at home, to compare the number of multi-millionaires in the United States, where profiteering was on a much larger scale than in England. The incomes exceeding a million dollars were in 1914, 60 ; in 1915, 120 ; in 1916, 206 ; in 1917, 161 ; in 1918, 67 ; in 1919, 65 ; in 1920, 33 ; in 1921, 21 ; in 1922, 67 ; in 1923, 74. The violence of these fluctuations is remarkable.

Since we cannot suppose that the war has made the country richer, it would be safe to deduct about one-third from the latest figures, which are far less favourable than those of the year of maximum inflation, in comparing the wealth of England now with what it was before the war. There has been a vast reshuffling of wealth, in which the main loss has fallen upon the holders of land and capital in 1914—the already existing fortunes—and the gain has been divided between a large number of traders, and the working classes, especially the unskilled labourers. Many of the distributors have made money ; they are numerous enough to overcrowd all our places of higher education, in spite of the impoverishment of many professional men who formerly sent their children to these seminaries, and are now unable to do so.

It is easy to prove that the distribution of incomes in this country is flagrantly disproportionate to the public services of the recipients. But it is not true that, as Ruskin constantly declaimed, a man can only become rich by making his neighbours poor ; or at any rate the neighbours are not those who are commonly thought of when the accusation is made.

There is very little "sweating" in England now, except among small tradesmen who cater for the working man himself. Fortunes are sometimes made by speculation and company-promoting, in which case it is plain that other capitalists are the victims. In estimating the profits of legitimate trade, we must remember that interest beyond the normal rate is an insurance against loss, paid, we may say, by the trading class as a whole. How great the risks are may be seen by studying the pages of a financial review which gives the yield of hundreds of enterprises; though even this does not state the whole case, since companies which have gone into liquidation do not appear in the list. Sir Benjamin Browne says: "When I came to Newcastle as an employer in 1870, I had occasion to meet all the engineering employers of Newcastle and Gateshead. I have kept an account of the subsequent history of these businesses, and I find that two-thirds of them perished disastrously. I think that of the twelve firms four still stand and prosper, but eight have closed. Again in 1870 the Admiralty bought all their important marine engines from four firms in London. Where are these four firms now? Gone, and I am not aware that they left any retired millionaires to represent their past work."—(*After-War Problems.*)

The average yield of industrial capital is not larger than the lowest rate which makes investment worth while. The *rentier* who derives his income from gilt-edged securities is in this country usually an industrious and thrifty member of the middle class, whose habits of saving are of great value to the community. He is, however, extremely vulnerable, since after saving his money he no longer performs any economic function. On the continent of Europe he has been pillaged without remorse.

The real gravamen against the owner of wealth is

that he often spends his money in a vulgar, tasteless, and unpatriotic manner. The way of living adopted by many of the new rich is as morally objectionable as it is politically insane. It is no new thing that "beggars on horseback ride their horse to death"; the cause is not so much ethical callousness as gross ignorance of the art of living. The working man, if his wages are suddenly doubled, behaves in the same way. There is no point in which we are so inferior to France as in the art of spending. The remedy is partly moral, but must be sought mainly in a better education.

There are, however, two sources of wealth, which in the last hundred years have been very important in this country, and of which it may be held, without imputing any blame to those who have taken what the law allowed them, that the State has missed a valuable opportunity of increasing its own resources. There seems to be no reason why a purchaser who acquires a piece of land in order to receive a modest return from the crops, should be the legal owner of all minerals found below the surface. These minerals he acquired, in most cases, without knowing of their existence, and minerals are not crops, since they do not replace themselves. It might have been a wise thing to claim State ownership for all wealth beneath the soil. At present, however, there is no honest demand for nationalization, a step from which neither the State nor the miners would derive any advantage, if compensation were paid. The demand is obviously only a stalking-horse for the real intention of the Syndicalist leaders, which is to seize the pits, without compensation, for the benefit of the men who work them.

The other doubtful source of wealth is that derived from ground rents, of which the French economist, Gide, says: "Building grounds situated in towns acquire fantastic surplus values and allow

their owners to charge rents, limited only by the capacity of tenants to pay. There is no other value in the world, in the original making of which the labour of man is so utterly lacking, nor on the other hand where the action of social causes is so clearly at work."—(Quoted by Marriott, *Economics and Ethics*.) Adam Smith also favoured the special taxation of ground rents. Attempts are now being made to penalize the ground landlord by levying enormous rates. This method, however, is a bad one. The rates are wastefully and often corruptly spent, and where " Labour " is in power are often administered in a really scandalous manner. It is, in fact, almost impossible without injustice to rectify a mistake which might well have been avoided. House property in a town is a favourite investment of the thrifty poor, so that confiscation would not injure the rich only.

The owner of agricultural land can no longer be regarded as an incubus to anybody. Sir John Marriott (*Economics and Ethics*) gives the following summary of agricultural prices and rents. " Between 1840 and 1883 the price of wheat was fairly constant between 40 and 50 shillings a quarter; but after 1883 the fall was rapid and practically continuous down to 1894, when wheat touched its bottom price of 17 shillings and sixpence per quarter, averaging for the year only 22 shillings and tenpence. Rents followed prices. By 1870 the remissions granted by landlords amounted on the average to not less than 30 per cent, while in the wheat-growing districts they frequently reached 75 per cent. After 1895 wheat prices began to rise slowly but steadily, till in 1907 they averaged 36 shillings and elevenpence, though they fell again to 32 shillings and eightpence for 1911-19. In 1920 they averaged 80 shillings and tenpence; in 1922 they fell to 47 shillings and tenpence." (For com-

parison, the price in 1812 was 126 shillings and sixpence.) The value of agricultural capital (not of the capital value of land) was estimated in 1840 at £1,938 millions, in 1922 at £1,686 millions. In France the figures were £1,743 millions in 1840, and £3,930 millions in 1922. What is called rent of course includes interest on capital spent in improvements. It is probable, as I have said, that at present no rent at all is being paid for the use of the soil in many parts of Great Britain.

In passing to another branch of my subject, I shall make no apology for giving what may seem an undue amount of space to the population question. The subject seems to be unpopular, and is certainly shirked in an unjustifiable way by most writers on economics and sociology. But in England it is the most desperately important of all problems, the rock on which all schemes of social reform may founder, and a danger which after an unsuccessful war or a social revolution may cause such a tragedy as our country has never known. It is also a problem directly caused by industrialism.

It is necessary first to give certain statistics, which though they are familiar to the student are by no means well known to the ordinary reader. In 1600 the population of England and Wales is thought to have been about five millions; in 1700 about five-and-a-half millions; in 1750 about six-and-a-half millions; in 1800 eight million nine hundred thousand; in 1901 thirty-two-and-a-half millions; in 1921, 37,885,242.—(Wright, *Population*.) The immense increase since 1800 is of course due to the industrial revolution and the new sources of food supply. But great changes in the distribution of the population had begun before 1800. In 1700 the five most populous counties are believed to have been Middlesex, Somerset, Gloucester, Wiltshire and Northamptonshire. In 1800 they were Middlesex,

Lancashire, the West Riding, Staffordshire, and Warwickshire.—(Hammond, *The Rise of Modern Industry*.) In the first twenty years of the nineteenth century the population of Manchester increased from 94,000 to 160,000; of Bolton from 29,000 to 50,000; Merthyr grew from 7,700 in 1801 to 35,000 in 1841. Sheffield in 1801 had 45,000 inhabitants; Birmingham 73,000. In 1921 Birmingham had 919,000, Liverpool 804,000, Manchester 751,000, Sheffield 491,000, Leeds 458,000, Bradford 286,000.

In the earlier period there was a direct artificial stimulus through the old Poor Law. This most mischievous measure has been already explained. Moreover, while child labour was permitted, each child was a potential asset to its parents; the humanitarian legislation which drove the children from the factories had other beneficial effects which were certainly not contemplated by its promoters.

It would be a mistake to suppose that this abnormal growth of population was peculiar to England. Germany between 1800 and 1900 increased from 21 to 56 million, Italy from 18 to 32, Austria-Hungary from 23 to 45, European Russia from 38 to 111 million. The total population of Europe increased from 180 million in 1800 to 450 million in 1910; it multiplied two-and-a-half times. —(Fueter, *World History*, 1815 *to* 1920.) This increase would have surprised Malthus; but he would have seen clearly that it was made possible only by new opportunities which promoted extensive cultivation of large amounts of virgin soil in America and elsewhere, and by cheap and rapid means of transportation. He would also have realized that such conditions can last only for a short time.

The decline in the birth-rate, which is not at all the same thing as a decline in the growth of population, began in this country about 1878. It is

disputed whether the Knowlton trial, which gave a wide advertisement to the possibility of birth-control, had much to do with the turn in the tide, or not. The decline in the birth-rate was inevitable, if for no other reason, because the death-rate was falling rapidly. The following table, which I take from East, will show that, contrary to the usual opinion, the ratio of births to deaths actually increased slightly between 1838 and the outbreak of the Great War. The figures are for England and Wales.

*Ratio of Births to one hundred Deaths*

| *Period* | | | *Period* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1838–1839 | .. | 140·28 | 1875–1879 | .. | 167·59 |
| 1840–1844 | .. | 148·04 | 1880–1884 | .. | 171·81 |
| 1845–1849 | .. | 139·61 | 1885–1889 | .. | 169·85 |
| 1850–1854 | .. | 151·69 | 1890–1894 | .. | 161·48 |
| 1855–1859 | .. | 155·23 | 1895–1899 | .. | 166·40 |
| 1860–1864 | .. | 157·30 | 1900–1904 | .. | 171·25 |
| 1865–1869 | .. | 157·11 | 1905–1909 | .. | 177·40 |
| 1870–1874 | .. | 161·35 | 1910–1914 | .. | 175·09 |

Another table will show the downward trend of European birth-rates from 1871 to 1915. Two figures are given in each case; the former is the birth-rate for 1871–1876, the latter for 1911 to 1915.

England and Wales, 35·5, 23·6; Scotland, 35·0, 25·4; Ireland, 27·4, 22·7; France, 25·5, 18·5; Germany, 38·9, 27·5; Austria, 39·3, 30·0; Hungary, 42·8, 34·0; Italy, 36·9, 31·4; Norway, 30·2, 25·2; Sweden, 30·7, 23·1; Russia, 50·3, 45·5 (for 1906–1910); Holland, 36·1, 27·7.

The excess of births over deaths per thousand of the population may be indicated in the same manner, though here the first figures in each pair are for the period 1890–1894: Australia, 19·7, 17·1; Austria, 9·0, 10·5; Belgium, 8·7, 7·6; France, 0·1, 0·4; Germany, 12·5, 12·5; Italy, 10·5, 12·8; Russia, 12·1, 16·1 (1905–1909); Sweden, 10·6, 9·8; the United Kingdom, 10·7, 10·0. It will be seen by

comparing the two tables that a high birth-rate by no means corresponds with a high rate of increase.

The war-years naturally showed a great falling-off in births, due to the absence of husbands at the front; it was equally to be expected that in the year after the demobilization there should be a sudden rise in the birth-rate. This rise took place, but the births very soon sank again to the normal figure. The birth-rate has fallen again rather sharply since unemployment became acute; in 1925 it was only slightly above 18.

So great a decline, amounting to nearly fifty per cent since the year of maximum fecundity, when the figure was 36, has been accompanied by a steady decline in the death-rate. The two lines run nearly parallel till 1914; since 1921 there has been a real slackening in the growth of population. Within the memory of many persons still alive, the death-rate has been reduced from twenty-two to twelve or thirteen per thousand, and the earlier figure is far below the rate which has been usual in past history. Macdonell, working on figures from the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, found that whereas in England at the age of fifteen the expectation of life is forty-five years for boys and forty-eight for girls, in ancient Rome it was only twenty for boys and fifteen for girls.—(Carr Saunders, *The Population Problem*.) In the middle ages, the deaths in the towns normally exceeded the births, without allowing for the not infrequent epidemics. The mortality was chiefly at the earlier ages, especially in infancy. Cases like that of the Colet family, where the famous Dean was the only one out of twenty-three children to reach maturity, were not very uncommon, as we may see by studying old pedigrees. As late as the middle of the eighteenth century, one quarter of the children born at Northampton died before their second birthday. This rate is exceeded in modern

India. "In the period 1902 to 1911 the average deaths of children for 1,000 births was in the United Provinces 352, in Bombay 320, in Burma 332, and in the Punjab 306."—(*Carr Saunders.*)

In India and China the land is so oversaturated with people that increase of population has almost ceased. In India the total gain between 1911 and 1921 was only 3,786,000, or 1·2 per cent; and though for China no trustworthy statistics are available, both the Registrar-General for England and the Director of the United States Census believe that the population is almost stationary. The yellow and brown man cannot increase any further, so long as the whites keep them out of the lands where they wish to settle.

It is not necessary in this volume to discuss the various methods of checking natural increase. Infanticide is no longer common in any civilized country except China. Late marriages used to be the rule among the rural poor of England, since the number of cottages was limited by the number of mouths whom the parish acres could feed; this check is now operative chiefly in the professional classes, where the young are usually underpaid and the old overpaid. Many professional men remain single till forty or later. Abortion is very largely resorted to by the poor, if they have no knowledge of the methods of birth-control; Miss Elderton's study of the conditions in our northern towns gives abundant evidence of the extent to which this practice prevails. We have to choose between the different methods of restriction, and there can be no doubt that the prevention of conception is less objectionable than abortion or the wilful neglect of babies after they are born.

It may be said that there is no proof that the country is now over-populated. Mr. Carr Saunders shows that real wages, after allowing for changes

in the cost of living, increased steadily down to 1900, and then remained nearly stationary till the war—a proof, he says, that the country was not over-populated. This, however, does not alter the fact that the optimum limit may now have been passed. If we aim at securing a comfortable subsistence for all, the optimum population will be far below the point of complete saturation, and a decrease in numbers would be very beneficial in England, even if the present disastrous prevalence of unemployment should prove to be partly the effect of transient post-war conditions.

A very common mistake made by persons who have made some study of vital statistics is to suppose that in order to secure a stationary population the birth-rate must be brought down to the level of the crude death-rate, *i.e.*, in this country to about twelve or thirteen per thousand. A little reflection will show that the figure twelve cannot represent the real death-rate, since this would mean an average life of eighty-three years. The death-rates calculated to stationary populations give very different results. The actual death-rates, so corrected, in the chief countries are given as follows by J. W. Glover:—(*United States Life Tables*, 1921.) Australia, 17·56; Denmark, 17·74; England, 19·85; France, 21·10; Germany, 21·50; Holland, 19·16; India, 43·58; Italy, 22·46; Japan, 22·52; Norway, 17·78; Sweden, 17·95; Switzerland, 19·74; United States, 19·66. This table indicates the comparative healthiness of different parts of the world. It also proves that in order to arrive at an equilibrium of births and deaths, it is enough to reduce the births to about eighteen per thousand. (The figures given by Glover for England are correct for 1901–1910, but are much too high for the present day.) That is to say, the birth-rate has already sunk almost as low as is necessary, though for many years to come, owing to

the disproportionate number of young lives in the population, the crude death-rate will be far below eighteen, and the undesirable growth of numbers will continue.

Are there any adequate reasons for thinking that our country, which till the Great War was, from the economic point of view only, not seriously over-populated, is so now, and is likely to be far more so in the future? I shall try to show that there are grave reasons for thinking so. Great Britain, Belgium, Holland, Italy and Germany are all over-peopled as units; they cannot feed themselves, and never will be able to feed themselves, except by importing food. England and Belgium are in the worst position of this list. Mr. Harold Cox raises the question in a very drastic form when he asks: "Is it desirable that England should deliberately aim at further expanding her urban industries, and at breeding a population whose main purpose from the Mother Country's point of view will be either to produce more manufactured goods at home, or to provide a market for those manufactured goods in the Dominions? This can only mean an increase of urbanization with all its attendant evils. Looked at from the point of view of the never entirely disappearing danger of war, this is surely an extremely unwise system of national and imperial economy. It would mean an ever increasing number of urban workers in the mother-land, dependent for their existence upon rural areas across the Atlantic or at the Antipodes. Already this dependence upon overseas supplies is an appreciable military weakness. From the human point of view such a system of national economy is utterly unwholesome. The urban worker becomes more completely removed from the healthy realities of rural life, while the rural worker, instead of being in fairly close touch with the social advantages of town life, is removed by

many thousand miles from his town market. In no part of the world can emigration be regarded as a permanently available remedy for over-population. No country can expect to be allowed for all time to dump on to other lands the people it cannot maintain at home. Nor can any country feel confident that it will always be allowed to sell its manufactured goods in external markets."—(*The Problem of Population.*)

This sounds like an argument for abandoning industrialism on a large scale altogether. The question is whether something of the kind will not be forced upon us. Mr. East has made a comprehensive study of the food supply of the world, and his conclusions are not reassuring. During the war, a report to the Food Committee showed that our food production was about forty per cent of our requirements.' In wheat and animal fats the proportion was only twenty per cent. It is unlikely that science will be able to increase this amount greatly. Mechanical invention does not increase productivity in the way that is often thought. The greatest return per acre is given by hard labour and simple tools. An acre of land in England is far more productive than an acre in Canada or the Argentine, because much more human labour is expended upon it. When the new countries are driven to intensive cultivation, it will be because more food is needed by the resident population. The United States has almost ceased to be a food-exporting country. Canada and Australia may have something to send for one more generation, Argentina perhaps for two generations. The rapid increase of population in Russia will soon remove that country from the food-exporting list, after it recovers a civilized government. All the indications point to a coming age when the nations will have to be far more self-supporting and independent of foreign trade than they are now.

The same note of warning is sounded by Mr. J. M. Keynes, who has shown himself to be one of the shrewdest economists of our time. " The prosperity of Europe was based on the facts that, owing to the large exportable surplus of foodstuffs in America, she was able to purchase food at a cheap rate measured in terms of the labour required to produce her own exports, and that as the result of her previous investments of capital she was entitled to a substantial amount annually without any payment at all. The second of these factors then seemed out of danger, but as a result of the growth of population overseas, chiefly in the United States, the first was not secure. . . . In short, Europe's claim on the resources of the New World was becoming precarious ; the Law of Diminishing Returns was at last reasserting itself and was making it necessary year by year for Europe to offer a greater quantity of other commodities to obtain the same amount of bread ; and Europe therefore could by no means afford the disorganization of any of her principal sources of supply. . . . The essential facts of the situation, as I see them, are expressed simply. Europe consists of the densest aggregation of population in the history of the world. This population is accustomed to a relatively high standard of life, in which even now some sections of it anticipate improvement rather than deterioration. In relation to other continents Europe is not self-sufficient ; in particular it cannot feed itself. The danger confronting us therefore is the rapid depression of the standard of life of the European populations to a point which will mean actual starvation for some (a point already reached in Russia and approximately reached in Austria). Men will not always die quietly. . . . Some of the catastrophes of past history, which have thrown back human progress for centuries, have been due to the reactions following

on the sudden termination, whether in the course of nature or by the act of man, of temporarily favourable conditions which have permitted the growth of population beyond what could be provided for when the favourable conditions were at an end."—(*Economic Consequences of the Peace.*)

Again, in 1919, Mr. Hoover, the American Food Controller, estimated that the population of Europe was at least one hundred millions greater than could be supported without imports, and warned the world that unless productivity could be rapidly increased there could be nothing but "political, moral and economic chaos, finally interpreting itself in loss of life hitherto undreamed of."—(Wright, *Population.*)

Mr. Cox reminds us that "as soon as men are brought up against the hard fact of hunger, moral considerations disappear." *Nescit plebes ieiuna timere.* When the scavenger dogs of Constantinople were sent by the Young Turks to a small island to starve to death, they ended by eating each other.

Nor is this the only or chief danger. Our difficulties will come upon us long before Canada needs all her wheat for her own consumption, and Australia is obliged to keep all her beef and mutton. Our prosperity is built upon coal and iron. Stanley Jevons in 1865 published a prophetic book called *The Coal Question*, which is, or ought to be, still a classic. It is by our possession of coal that we have made all quarters of the world our tributaries. "The plains of North America and Russia are our cornfields; Canada and the Baltic are our timber-forests; Australasia contains our sheep-farms, and in Argentina and on the western plains of North America are our herds of oxen; Peru sends her silver, and the gold of South Africa and Australia flows to London; the Hindus and the Chinese grow tea for us, and our coffee, sugar and spice plantations are all the Indies. Spain and France are our vineyards,

and the Mediterranean our fruit-garden ; and our cotton-grounds, which for long have occupied the Southern United States, are now being extended everywhere in the warm regions of the earth." All this our coal has done for us ; but " we cannot long maintain our present rate of consumption ; the cost of fuel must rise, perhaps within a lifetime, to a rate injurious to our commercial and manufacturing supremacy, and the conclusion is inevitable, that our present happy progressive condition is a thing of limited duration." " A sudden check to the expansion of our supply would be the very manifestation of exhaustion we dread. It would at once bring on us the rising price, the transference of industry, and the general reverse of prosperity, which we may hope not to witness in our days." " It has been suggested by many random thinkers that when our coal is done here we may import it as we import so many other raw materials from abroad. I am sorry to say that the least acquaintance with the principles of trade, and the particular circumstances of our trade, furnishes a complete negative to all such notions. While the export of coal is a great and growing branch of our trade, a reversal of the trade and a future return current of coal, is a commercial impossibility and absurdity. . . . No one will properly understand the trade in coal who forgets that coal is the most bulky and weighty of all commodities. The cost of carriage is the main element of price everywhere except in the coal-field or its close neighbourhood." The possibility of an export trade in coal " is mainly due to the fact that coal is carried as ballast or makeweight, and is subject to the low rates of back-carriage. Our imports consist of bulky raw materials and food. . . To import coal as well as other raw materials would be against the essentially reciprocal nature of trade."—(*Jevons, quoted by Wright.*)

This argument is as unanswerable as it was disquieting, it is said, to Gladstone when he read it. How coal gives life to an industrial community may be illustrated by the case of Germany. The output of German coal grew from thirty million tons in 1871 to one hundred and ninety million tons in 1913, and in the latter year Germany was the very heart of the European system. The possession of coalfields was one of the chief objects for which Germany and France fought each other in the war.

And now our coal supremacy is visibly departing from us, and the disaster which Jevons prayed that he might not live to see is at hand. Coal has become steadily dearer, chiefly perhaps because the hewers and those who carry the coal no longer give such good value for their wages, but partly because the most easily accessible seams are nearly worked out. Many other industries are depressed by the high price of coal, and any considerable further increase, such as seems to be necessary if the industry as a whole is to be remunerative, might kill our export trade altogether. It is a real *impasse*, of which the revolutionary junta who have captured the government of the trade unions took advantage in May, 1926, to make an organized and dangerous attack upon constitutional government by the favourite Syndicalist weapon of a general strike. Such criminal conspiracies, it is needless to say, cannot retard the decay of industry by a single day ; they can only accelerate it.

Iron ore is now largely imported into this country ; we have to look abroad for more than one-third of our supply. " Between 1900 and 1913 the American output of pig-iron rose from fourteen to over thirty millions of tons, that of Germany from eight to twenty millions, while that of Great Britain rose from nine to a little over ten millions."—(*Wright.*) It is impossible to see any way out of this difficulty.

Our commercial and manufacturing prosperity seems to be doomed to rapid contraction, and if so, our population must also contract or starve. Emigration, though not a permanent cure for over-population, is a very useful palliative, and I have given reason for believing that even if the birth-rate remains stationary at its present figure, 18, an equilibrium of population will be reached, in perhaps about fifteen years from now. But something more than an equilibrium will almost certainly be necessary; we shall find ourselves with at least ten million more people than can find any means of subsistence. The Dominions could find room for this number, if our emigrants were of the right type. Unfortunately, the whole tendency of trade-union policy is to make the British workman so troublesome and inefficient that he is nowhere welcome. The employers in the new countries much prefer to take Scandinavians or Germans or Italians. A better type of emigrant can no doubt be found in the upper and middle classes, but of these the number is limited. They will be very useful citizens in the Dominions, but their departure will not do much to relieve the pressure at home. We must therefore leave this all-important branch of our subject without pretending to see a ray of hope for British industry in the future.

The situation strongly indicates that measures ought to be taken to encourage methods of birth-control among the masses of the population. The opposition to this policy comes chiefly from certain religious bodies, and from the Socialists, who, following Marx and Proudhon, are violently antagonistic to any course of action which would diminish human misery and thus make men less discontented and ready for a revolution. These gentry vehemently oppose any proposals to encourage emigration, from the same motive. To quote the manifesto of the

International of 1873 : " Every effort is to be made to increase and heighten the evils and sorrows which will at length wear out the patience of the people, and encourage an insurrection *en masse*." Apart from the moral obliquity which this attitude exhibits, it may be doubted whether it is good policy from the point of view of those who adopt it. For hopeless misery is seldom a seed-plot of revolution. Much rather are revolutions made by those who, having gained much, desire more. They are generated by chimerical hopes rather than by despair. Quite recently, however, there are signs that " Labour " is reconsidering its position on this subject, and we must hope that those members of the party who are not wholly deaf to the appeals of common sense and patriotism will be able to make their influence felt.

A kindred question, which cannot be omitted in any attempt to estimate the present and future condition of the English people, is the alleged deterioration in the physical and intellectual qualities of the nation as the result of a dysgenic distribution of births. This problem is far from being peculiar to England. All over the world civilization seems to have the result of sterilizing those classes which, whether deservedly or not, have won success. The law of a differential birth-rate was noticed already by Adam Smith. " Poverty," he says, " seems even to be favourable to generation. A half-starved Highland woman frequently bears more than twenty children, while a pampered fine lady is often incapable of bearing any, and is generally exhausted by two or three. But poverty, though it does not prevent the generation, is extremely unfavourable to the rearing of children. It is not uncommon, I have been frequently told, in the Highlands of Scotland, for a mother who has borne twenty children not to have two alive."

How serious the disparity is may be gathered from the following table, from material furnished to the private Birth-Rate Commission by the Registrar-General. The figures refer to 1911, but there is no reason to suppose that the relative percentages have altered much, though all alike must have declined considerably.

*Births per* 1000 *married males under* 55 *years*

| | |
|---|---|
| Upper and middle classes ... ... | 119 |
| Intermediate ... ... ... ... | 132 |
| Skilled workmen ... ... ... | 153 |
| Intermediate ... ... ... ... | 158 |
| Unskilled workmen ... ... ... | 213 |

The higher death-rate in the lowest social rank is not nearly enough to counteract this disparity; if we deduct in each class the deaths of infants under one year old, the corrected numbers are 110, 118, 136, 139, 181.—(*Carr Saunders.*)

This wide difference in the fecundity of social classes seems to be a new phenomenon. Before the industrial revolution, as has been stated already, the poor usually married late, while the richer classes frequently had enormous families. Prudential restraint was rare; there was a superstitious belief that "where God sends mouths, He sends meat." Nor was there, at that time, the same difficulty in providing for children in the privileged classes, although the number of callings considered suitable for a gentleman was far more restricted than it is now. The government had a large number of comfortable offices to give to the sons of its friends. Among the workpeople, I have already shown that every child was an asset, until child labour was forbidden; and till a much later date, the working man and his wife looked to their children to give them a home during the last period of old age. At present, the chief limiting factor is women's wages. In the textile trades, and others where the

earnings of the wife are a regular item in the family budget, the number of children is artificially restricted, either by prevention of conception or by abortion. This is the explanation of the low birth-rate of towns like Bradford. On the other hand, the miners have very large families, because their wives earn no wages, and because a young miner, when trade is good, may begin to earn high wages at a very early age. The miners are the only class possessing valuable social qualities (they are at least physically fit) who have a high birth-rate. The population is recruited most rapidly from the slums of our great towns, the underworld where the inhabitants have no standards to keep up and no social ambitions. As an extreme case, we may compare the Finsbury birth-rate of 41 with 9 for the City of Westminster. The feeble-minded are notoriously prolific.

Among the upper and middle classes everything combines to make a large family undesirable. A good income, if it ever comes, is gained only late in life. The expenses of education are enormous; the education of a boy who will be lucky if he earns £250 a year before he is thirty, may easily cost his father £3,000. Cultivated people also value privacy, which is impossible to secure in a small house full of children. It may be added that in the upper class the unmarried man can give himself many comforts and luxuries which he will have to surrender if he marries. In the working class, on the contrary, the wife, who is a domestic drudge, a servant without wages, adds greatly to the comfort of the man. The opening of new careers for women has also withdrawn many, especially among clever and intellectual women, from marriage and motherhood. The percentage of women graduates who have children, or more than one child, is extremely low in England, and lower still in America. In the

United States, indeed, the native American is becoming a kind of aristocrat, and, like aristocracies in general, is failing to keep up his numbers. According to Hill, who has investigated this matter in America, the percentage of white women of native parentage under 45 years of age bearing no children is 13·1, while the percentage of foreign women is 5·7. The average number of children for white married women of native parentage is 2·7, and for similar women of foreign parentage, 4·4. Among the foreign women the average number of children for a married Englishwoman is 3.4, for a German 4·3, for an Italian 4·9, for a Pole 6·2.—(*Carr Saunders.*)

The question has been much discussed whether this relative sterility among the well-to-do is mainly volitional, or due to other causes. Professor Raymond Pearl, of Baltimore, claims to have established a law of increase which follows a regular curve, so that he can predict the approximate date when the population of the United States will become stationary, at about 200 million in the year 2100. Delicate inquiries have also led him to connect the smaller families of the intellectual class with the less frequent gratification of their appetites. These theories, in spite of their ingenuity, fail to convince me, but the subject need not be discussed here. The fact is enough for our present purpose; our population is being mainly recruited from those social strata which most of us would consider the least likely to produce valuable citizens.

Political prejudice has been introduced into the discussion, and some have even contended that the children of the "submerged tenth," if they were given a fair chance, would do as well as the children of the professional man. To argue this question would take us too far afield. There is not really the slightest doubt that whatever tests of physical and mental proficiency are chosen, the children of the

upper and middle classes are intrinsically far better endowed than the children of unskilled labourers. And it is probable that the eugenist would place at the top of his list just those three professions in which the birth-rate is lowest—the doctors, the ministers of religion, and the teachers.

No doubt there is something to be said on the other side. Fecundity seems to be connected with poverty, not with intellectual inferiority. If, therefore political changes depress the most gifted stocks into extreme poverty, and heap wealth on trade union officials and political agitators who are usually very undesirable citizens, the former class may be induced to increase, the latter to die out. Again, social position once gained has been so stable in England that even if the founder of a family was an able man, his descendants may be below the average. Thirdly, it may be disputed whether the qualities which lead to the acquisition of wealth are very desirable in a State which wishes to cultivate mutual helpfulness and unselfishness. But when all has been said, the dysgenic tendency of modern civilization is an undeniable and an exceedingly serious fact. The burdens of civilized life grow heavier in each generation, and the backs that are to bear them are likely to grow steadily weaker. Applied eugenics might remedy the evil, when more is known about the laws of heredity than has yet been established with any certainty; but a race that is deteriorating biologically is most unlikely to take far-sighted views about its own future. The Greeks in the age of Plato and Aristotle could do so; but intellectually we are far behind the Athenians of the fourth and fifth centuries before Christ.

This discussion points to the conclusion that we have nearly reached the termination of that unique age of national expansion which began about a

hundred and sixty years ago. There are signs that we shall have to face a period of contraction, in which both wealth and population will shrink. If Mr. Cox is right in thinking that a manufacturing country, living on foreign trade, is necessarily in an unhealthy state, we may accept the gradual reversion of England towards the conditions of 1750 without excessive regret, though it is by no means pleasant to think of our country ceasing to be one of the Great Powers, and still more disquieting to think of what the transition may mean to us and our children. But prophecy is always dangerous, and it would be true to say that things seldom turn out either so well or so badly as strict calculation would lead us to expect. We shall be on safer ground if we attempt an estimate of that remarkable phase in our history which is still unfinished, though it may be coming to an end.

The industrialism of the nineteenth century must not be judged by equalitarian theories which it never accepted, but by its organic results. It is quite misleading to contrast the "individualism" of the nineteenth century with the "socialism" of the twentieth. Much that calls itself socialism is rather individualism run mad; it chafes at the idea that anyone should, for the sake of society as a whole, receive less than he earns. Conversely, the "individualism" of the *laissez faire* period was partly inspired by a genuine idealism. The concentration upon production was, as we now see, carried too far; but the moving spirit in it was not so much greed of individual gain, as pride in making England the richest and greatest nation in the world. The employer of the first half of the nineteenth century was a hard man, but he was hard to himself as well as to his hands. It has been said that he worked like a slave, and ruled like a slave-master. But there can be no question that in so living he thought him-

self a good patriot, and even a good Christian. I will end this chapter by enumerating the defects of the civilization thus generated; but it would not be fair to ignore its great achievements. And in weighing one against the other it is desirable to consider what philosophy of life underlay the ruthless activities of the century of expansion, which has also been truly called the century of hope.

The ideal of creative industry as a life pleasing to God and beneficial to man belongs especially to the religion of Calvin and his followers. It has been said that the modern business man, if he is not a child of the Ghetto, is generally a grandchild of John Calvin. To devote one's whole energies to some practical task, rejecting pleasure and spurning luxury, is the form of asceticism which Calvinism substitutes for the disciplinary exercises and the mortifications of Catholicism. The Calvinist does not inquire closely whether his activities are really beneficent or not; he does not take nearly enough pains to get his values right. On the other hand he condemns idleness; he condemns commercial gambling, and he looks askance on trades which merely minister to luxury. Such a creed was indeed likely to lead to great success in business for the man or the class that practised it; but it was not mere covetousness; genuine Calvinism is above all, a discipline of the inner life. Its worst errors were those which we associate rather with State Socialism than with individualism—a readiness to sacrifice the happiness of large numbers to the ideal of maximum prosperity for the nation as a whole. The Calvinist litany was a table of statistics, showing expansion "by leaps and bounds." The dark side of the social polity which it engendered was expressed by Lord Byron when he said in the House of Lords: "I have been in some of the most oppressed provinces of Turkey, but never under the most

despotic of infidel governments did I behold such squalid wretchedness as I have seen since my return in the very heart of a Christian country."

Yet we should do injustice to the disciples of the Manchester School if we supposed that they had no higher ideals for society than to see England fat and prosperous. They were humanitarian in such questions as slavery and the reform of the criminal law. And their crusade for universal peace and free trade, though it proved to be only a dream, was surely a noble one. "Bright and Cobden believed that in preaching the faith of free trade, they were also making straight the path of peace for all peoples. Other continental powers preferred to follow the military lead of Germany rather than the economic lead of England. The disciples of the Manchester School hoped for and expected the reign of peace, and they desired to accelerate its advent by throwing down all commercial barriers, and treating the whole world as a fiscal unit. They failed; but who shall say that their success might not have averted Armageddon?"—(*Marriott.*)

Tennyson, the spokesman of the best aspirations of his time, called upon the rulers of the nations to realize this hope.

> O ye the wise who think, the wise who reign,
> From growing commerce loose her latest chain,
> And let the fair white-winged peacemaker fly
> To happy havens under all the sky,
> And mix the seasons and the golden hours,
> Till each man find his own in all men's good,
> And all men work in noble brotherhood,
> Breaking their mailéd fleets and arméd towers,
> And ruling by obeying nature's powers,
> And gathering all the fruits of earth,
> And crowned with all her flowers.

The ideal was not wholly Christian, since it over-emphasized the importance of the paraphernalia of life, which Christ taught us to regard as a snare

rather than an advantage. Columbus opined that "he who possesses gold has all he needs in this world, and also the means of rescuing souls from purgatory, and restoring them to the enjoyment of paradise." Tennyson's Northern Farmer exhorts his son: "Take my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad." This is also the opinion of the aged Cephalus in Plato's *Republic*. The chief advantage of being well off, the patriarch informs Socrates, is that it is so easy for the rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Christianity on the other hand teaches that though respectability will save us from the disreputable vices, it is no friend to the heroic virtues, to which it would have us aspire.

And yet, what a long list of great achievements this one-sided civilization has to its credit! It broke Napoleon, whose power was exhausted by the invincible spirit of the ruling oligarchy, by the dogged patriotism of the people generally, and by the immense productivity of the English factories. It was still strong enough to wear out the Germans in the Great War. It spread the English language and institutions over the whole world, and brought one quarter of the globe, and of its population, under the flag of order and liberty. It brought cheap comforts within the reach of nearly the whole people, for the first time in history. Never before has modest comfort been so widely diffused. It so improved the means of transport that the most distant lands were brought near together. Even a socialist like Mr. Sidney Webb does justice to the achievements of the system. "It must be admitted that, despite all drawbacks, this enormous development of successful profit-making meant, at any rate for the time being, a vast increase in that part of the nation's earnings which may fairly be called its wealth. If wages were low, and the conditions

of labour so bad as to be destructive of the people, the continual pressure for a cheapening of production largely benefited the consumer. The profit-makers themselves found their greatest gains in increasing output and consumption by a continuous lowering of the price of commodities that everyone consumed and of service that everyone used. Combination among capitalists to maintain prices above [too far above ?] the cost of production, was practically unknown. The whole nation shared, through declining prices, combined with a reasonably stable currency and, on the whole, stable or even slightly rising rates of wages, in the ever-growing stream of commodities, and steadily widened the range and increased the quantity of its consumption." Lastly, the cheapness of newspapers and books diffused a genuine though rather superficial culture over very wide circles ; and the great rewards open to applied science encouraged innumerable inventions for saving labour and reducing costs.

It was, however, a materialistic civilization, which expressed itself in the ugliness of its products. The secret of beauty in some of the arts was lost ; at no time or place had the hand of man erected anything so squalid and hideous as the new towns of England. Moreover, the interests of the producer were less considered than those of the consumer. The workman benefited by cheapness, but not to the same extent as the rich, and if there is such a thing as a " just price " for labour, he frequently received less than his due. The fortunes of the rich, on the other hand, were generally out of all proportion to the social service rendered by them. Hence the division of society into " two nations," as Disraeli put it. The epigram was hardly even approximately true, for the middle class in England was unusually large ; but there was a large class of underpaid workmen, and lines of social cleavage were drawn

far too sharply. It was certain that as soon as the labouring class obtained the franchise and became educated, the whole industrial system would begin to totter. The country was faced with the danger of a discontented and anti-patriotic class, imbued with the notion that material comfort is all that matters in life, and that they themselves are unjustly deprived of it. There are only two ways of dealing with the spirit of revolt—superior force, and the payment of Danegeld. An industrial society always resorts to the latter, and we now see the populace debauched by doles of every kind, as in ancient Rome. Capital is obliged to pay an ever-increasing ransom, and taxation has now begun to check production and increase unemployment.

Production and consumption are also involved in a vicious circle. It is "good for trade" that the largest number of persons should buy various commodities and adopt an increasing scale of expenditure. Hence high wages encourage production and give more employment. But the high wages must, in the long run, be earned; and it becomes more and more difficult to earn enough to pay for the comforts and amusements which the worker expects, especially as he demands a shorter working day in order to enjoy his improved condition. The standard of living, or, at least, the claim to such a standard, has been raised to a height which it is impossible to maintain, and in consequence we are threatened with ever-increasing discontent. This is the logical result of a movement which for a long time seemed to promise continually advancing well-being and happiness.

In the opinion of the present writer, there is no remedy except to seek a higher and truer standard of values, such as has been preached by idealists of all creeds, times and countries, but never so clearly and plainly as in the authoritative documents and

traditions of the Christian religion. Christianity is not committed to any political or economic theory, but it inculcates the spirit which would make almost any form of government work satisfactorily. The Churches, which have always instinctively sought to ally themselves with any political party which seems to be in the ascendant, have too often perverted the message which they ought to deliver. True Christianity is a revolutionary idealism which has repelled the revolution because it is idealistic, and "the world" because it is revolutionary. It attacks the secular standard of values, which is held in common by all political factions. In contrasting the teaching of Christ with the secularized perversion of His teaching which is now so popular, I cannot improve upon the words of Professor Peabody of Harvard. "Whatever social teaching there may be (in the recorded words of Christ), the mind of the Teacher was primarily turned another way. Jesus does not fling himself into the social issues of his time. He moves through them with a strange tranquillity; not as one who is indifferent to them, but as one whose eye is fixed on an end in which these social problems will find their own solution. Jesus will not be diverted by the demand for a social teaching from the special message of spiritual renewal which he is called to bring. In short, Jesus approaches the social question from within; he deals with individuals. It is for others to serve the world by organization, he serves it through inspiration." Again: "The kingdom of God, in the business world as elsewhere, is not an external growth but a spiritual revolution, to be created not by better machinery but by better men. Each undertaking of fraternalism and co-operation in industry; each provision for training in efficiency and responsibility; each form of mutual service and loyalty in business, which con-

verts economic science into moral science, is not only a contribution to industrial peace, but a witness to the validity of the church of the Spirit." (Peabody, *The Church of the Spirit.*)

In plain living and high thinking will be our salvation, or the salvation of the " remnant " which will survive the turmoils of an age of transition. Plain living will be forced upon us, whether we will or not, for the conditions of prosperity are in part slipping from us, and in part are being wantonly thrown away ; high thinking will not only make us citizens of the City " whose type is laid up in heaven," but will mitigate the acerbities of a struggle for which the responsibility cannot be laid solely on the shoulders of any one class. Aristotle would teach us that " to be always seeking after utilities does not become free and elevated souls," and that " we must train the nobler sort of natures not to desire more than they have got." But the New Testament is equally insistent that whatever work we have to do must be done " heartily, as to the Lord and not to men," and that those who will not work have no claim on the community for maintenance. Still more decisive is the warning that a house divided against itself cannot stand.

# CHAPTER V

## DEMOCRACY

In my last chapter I sketched the lusty youth and prosperous middle age of an economic movement which, after transforming the whole type of our civilization, seems now to be entering on its period of decline. In the present chapter we shall have to consider the growth, at first apparently irresistible and destined to absolute victory, of a political theory which, like industrialism, is now in danger of being undermined.

The history of Democracy in England is mainly the history of the House of Commons, and no survey of English life would be complete without a brief summary of this most characteristic product of our national history. Whether we agree with Professor A. F. Pollard (to whose new book on *The Evolution of Parliament* I owe the greater part of the pages which follow) that " parliamentary institutions have been incomparably the greatest gift of the English people to the civilization of the world," or whether we sympathize with Thomas Carlyle, who, in conversation with Sir Garnet Wolseley, described the House of Commons as " six hundred talking asses, set to make laws and administer the concerns of the greatest empire the world has ever seen," and expressed the hope that Sir Garnet might one day repeat the performance of Oliver Cromwell by " locking the door on yonder place and turning them all about their business," there can be no question but that representative government has been in the main a British invention, which has been the model of all other parliaments in Europe and beyond Europe. It has been transplanted, with a touching faith in its efficacy as an instrument of order and liberty, into lands which had known only personal government, and where angry passions

are less under control than among English gentlemen. The opinion is now wide-spread, that it is fitted only for the temperament of Anglo-Saxons; it is threatened even in the home of its origin by Syndicalism, by State Socialism, and by the admirers of foreign dictators. But it has been and is a great experiment, eminently characteristic of the national temper.

The word Parliament, as Sir Courtenay Ilbert reminds us, means a talk. It was at first applied to the conference itself, not to the persons holding it. It existed in germ before the Conquest, but not as a national institution. For our purposes, we need not go further back than the model Parliament of Edward I in 1295, to which were summoned separately the two archbishops, all the bishops, the greater abbots, seven earls, and forty-one barons. The ecclesiastics brought with them representatives of their cathedral chapters; and every sheriff was directed to cause two knights of each shire, two citizens of each city, and two burgesses of each borough to be elected. This parliament has been called the beginning of English nationalism, and of English liberty. For the "liberties" won by the Great Charter were mainly unjust privileges and exemptions. The commons in 1348 petitioned the King that "whereas liberties have been so lavishly granted by our lord the King that almost the whole of the realm has been enfranchised, to the great oppression of the people and hindrance to the common law, may it please our lord the King to refrain from such concessions in the future." One of the services of parliament was to abolish the "liberties" extorted by the barons from King John.

We used to be told that the three Estates of the Realm were the clergy, the barons, and the commons, This classification was officially recognized in 1421; but it is so important to realize that there was never

any separation of the three orders, like that which was abolished in France in 1789, that Professor Pollard even speaks of "the myth of the three estates." The clergy, it is true, long continued to meet and legislate in their own convocations, and to tax themselves, and the bishops and abbots attended the great councils of the nation rather as feudal lords than as ecclesiastics; but in England the system of "estates" decayed and died, while parliament became more and more national and representative of the whole people. The idea of "estates" is now being revived by lay and clerical syndicalists; their theory is atavistic and disruptive. "The whole conception of caste implied in the word [estate] was alien to English law and English politics."—(*Pollard.*)

The power of the purse has been decisive in securing the predominance of parliament, and ultimately of the Commons. The medieval parliament was an expansion of the King's Council, and it was usually summoned because the King wanted money. Normally the King was expected to "live of his own," that is to say, on the revenues of his domains and his feudal dues. He was expected to keep the peace at home and to make war abroad without the means to do either. These things were not the business of parliament. So the necessary supplies could only be wrung out of the Commons by promises which often could not be redeemed, and a spirited foreign policy was impossible. On the other hand, a prince who was not troubled with rebellion at home, and who was able to avoid foreign quarrels, might govern without parliaments, to the general satisfaction of his subjects. "What," asked Sir Thomas Smith in 1560, "can a commonwealth desire more than peace, liberty, quietness, little taking of their money, few parliaments?" What indeed? a modern Englishman may ask, with a wistful sigh

for the happy days of good Queen Bess. Charles I. however, could not make both ends meet without illegal taxation, nor Charles II without subsidies from France.

Modern research has exposed several erroneous beliefs about the historical foundations of parliaments. Legislation was not their primary business. A hereditary peerage and popular representation were not elements in their original constitution. Parliament did not always consist of two houses. On the other hand, the presence of the King in person was at one time essential, and it is only quite lately that it has been ruled that a parliament may continue to sit, without a fresh election, after the death of the sovereign. The old parliaments must have looked rather like a Durbar held by an Asiatic potentate. In Queen Elizabeth's reign, as is shown by old prints, the king or queen sat on a magnificent throne, at some distance from the rows of legislators. In subsequent reigns the throne is less exalted, and is brought nearer to the other seats.

The High Court of Parliament was presided over by the Lord Chancellor, who was there in virtue of his office; he was not always a peer, and has never been summoned as a peer. He was a judge, acting as such. The main business of the early parliaments was to execute justice, by deciding on "petitions." Fleta, in the reign of Edward I or Edward II, says: "The King has his court in his council in his parliaments, in the presence of earls, barons, nobles, and others learned in the law, where judicial doubts are determined, and new remedies are established for new wrongs, and justice is done to everyone according to his deserts." It is easy to see how the practice of presenting collective petitions developed into a power of legislation, subject only to the royal assent; and it was not very long before the King ceased to exer-

cise his constitutional right to "think it over," the courteous form in which the royal consent to legislation could be withheld.

Until the Stuarts, there was no law that a baron summoned to one parliament must be summoned to the next. For instance, Edward II summoned ninety barons in 1321, and only fifty-two in the following year. The hereditary peerage seems in fact to be a legal fiction; an earldom was an office, not very unlike the lord-lieutenancy of a county. Even in the reign of Charles II it was decided that the tenure of a barony did not carry with it the right to be summoned to parliament. Nevertheless, the tendency of offices to become hereditary was exceedingly strong in the middle ages. In France not only the count or lord lieutenant, but the sheriff (*vicomte*) became hereditary, and there was a struggle in England before the sheriff became merely an official. "Viscount" in England is an entirely meaningless title, borrowed from France. There was also a tendency to separate the greater barons from the smaller; the smaller were merged in the gentry, the larger established their hereditary claims and became "the peerage" in our modern sense. Edward III and Richard II created dukes and marquises as well as viscounts; the great nobles were now becoming dangerous rivals of the crown, who showed their power by forcing Richard II to abdicate. The Lancastrian kings tried to govern through parliament, but failed; the Plantagenet dynasty disappeared in the sanguinary faction fights under Henry VI.

The "Commons" (*communitates*) were communes, the county courts at which the knights of the shire were chosen. Freeholders who possessed less than a forty-shilling freehold were "excused" attendance by Edward I, and this qualification, which was originally a rather high one, remained for centuries

after it had become a very low one. In the middle ages no one wished for the franchise, or claimed the right to vote; it was an irksome duty. On one celebrated occasion the two knights for Oxfordshire fled the country on their election. Until the reign of Henry VIII parliament seemed to be on the down grade ; it met less and less frequently. But it continued to represent and foster the unity of the realm. The revolt of Cornwall against being taxed to defend the Scottish border was an anachronism in the reign of Henry VII, and still more so was Hampden's argument against ship money, that it could not be levied on inland counties.

Nothing is further from the truth than the notion that the Tudors tried to diminish the powers of parliament. Under Henry VIII and Elizabeth the member of parliament became an important person, and we begin to hear of contested elections. The parliament that made the Reformation sat for six and a half years, and throughout the reign Henry and his parliament played into each other's hands. The King said to the Commons : " We be informed by our judges that we at no time stand so highly in our estate royal as in the time of parliament, wherein we as head and you as members are conjoined and knit together in one body politic, so as whatsoever offence or injury during that time is offered to the meanest member of the house, is to be judged as done against our person and the whole court of parliament." Parliament, it was now declared, " cannot err."

Elizabeth and her parliament avoided friction by mutual consideration, but with the Stuarts a violent conflict broke out between a parliament which claimed to be above the law, responsible neither to crown nor people, and a theory of kingship resting on divine hereditary right. Constitutionally, the kings had perhaps the best of the argument, for

parliament was in no sense fighting the battle of popular liberties, but of its own irresponsible power. The Commons claimed for their resolutions the force of law; in 1649 they abolished the other two branches of the legislature; they extended their own term of existence; they excluded their opponents from the house. Cromwell called this procedure "horrid arbitrariness."

This aggressive spirit continued through the eighteenth century. The Commons had not taken away the power of the crown in order to confer it on the electors. In the notorious case of John Wilkes, in 1769, the Commons declared the defeated candidate to have been duly elected. The voters were not consulted on public questions; elections were decided on local and personal grounds. It was this irresponsible and non-representative body that George III tried to corrupt and cajole, not without success. This royal intervention, which seemed to threaten a return to Stuart theories of monarchy, really made reform inevitable, though the French Revolution and the war delayed it for a generation. Reform, in its turn, brought to an end the irresponsibility of the House of Commons. I cannot agree with Professor Pollard that by abandoning its privilege it extended its sway, and became omnipotent. The democratizing of parliament has been fatal to its power and prestige, and it is becoming increasingly doubtful whether its days are not numbered. It cannot be insisted on too strongly that the sovereignty which in the seventeenth century was wrested from the crown, was in principle surrendered by the Commons in 1832, and that the new principle of democratic representation, then admitted, has now been carried to its logical conclusion in universal suffrage, a form of government which is by no means favourable to the efficient working of our parliamentary system.

Before closing this brief summary of our parliamentary history, it may be worth while to notice some marked differences between popular government on the two sides of the Atlantic. When the American rebels drew up their constitution, which in many ways was a most masterly achievement, they laid great stress on the doctrine of "the separation of powers." This doctrine asserts that the legislative, executive, and judicial functions of the State ought to be separated from, and independent of each other. Montesquieu quite erroneously thought that this principle was observed in the British constitution, from which, in fact, it is conspicuously absent; and it was from Montesquieu that the Americans borrowed it, though they were predisposed in its favour by their own institutions. Thus the Americans got their President, who is not responsible to Congress, and has a good deal of power; their two Houses of Congress, and their Supreme Court, which interprets the written constitution. The work of legislation seems to be done mainly by committees of Congress; debates are less important than with us. It is obvious that the written constitution gives a security which we lack; but such safeguards are not always so great an advantage, nor the absence of them so great a danger, as might be supposed.

Medieval conditions in England were finally terminated not by the revolution of 1688, but by the industrial revolution a hundred years later. The villages remained medieval till the cottage industries disappeared. Politically, the movement in the eighteenth century had been what it is the fashion to call reactionary. The Whig oligarchy was more powerful than the nobles of an earlier period. Their position was very different from that of the French nobility. The French noblesse had privileges without power; the English landlords

had power without privileges. Now that their reign is over, it is possible even for stalwart democrats to admit that they approached more nearly to being a true aristocracy than the corresponding class in any continental country. They lived on their estates, and many of them, like the famous Coke of Norfolk, were proud of being "improving landlords." They were never a rigidly exclusive caste; their younger sons descended into the upper middle class, and middle class families, by the purchase of land, might almost at once take their place among the aristocracy. Above all, they were not idle. They administered the country both in parliament and locally, doing the work which elsewhere fell to State officials. They successfully resisted Napoleon, when all the other European aristocracies collapsed at the first blow. They patronized art and literature, and were often highly cultivated themselves. The small bucolic squireen of the seventeenth century was disappearing in the eighteenth. Their manifold activities left, undoubtedly, too much time for drinking, gambling, duelling, and other follies. At the time of the Regency, just before the Reform Bill which brought their reign to an end, books like the Creevey Papers give an unpleasant impression of a coarse, arrogant, and self-indulgent society, such as has never been allowed to enjoy its unearned prerogatives for long. But a fair account of the same class in the reign of Queen Victoria would give a much more favourable picture.

The opposition of the Commons to the Reform Bill was largely due to a jealousy against handing over to the nation powers which were conceived to belong to the House. We are accustomed to think of representative government as having been for centuries the theory of the constitution, a theory which successive Reform Bills established as a reality in practice. But there was no theory of

representative government. In 1794, Pitt's Attorney-General claimed that it was "High treason for any man to agitate for the establishment of representative government, the direct contrary of the government which is established here."—(*Trevelyan.*) As for Democracy, the very word was anathema. Gibbon says, with horror, of Charles James Fox, that "his inmost soul is deeply tinged with Democracy." Bagehot declares that "we must withstand even the commencement of a democratic revolution." It was, as Mr. Trevelyan says, an unwritten clause in the settlement of 1689 that the landlord class, in return for supporting the supremacy of the Lower House against the pretensions of the Crown, should have the right of nominating most of its members. To redistribute seats was to lose this privilege, under which the House of Commons was largely a co-optive body, and to transfer the power to the electors. We have come to think that the House of Commons exists to carry out the will of the people; but this was neither the theory nor the practice of parliamentary government a hundred years ago.

This is why the absurdities of parliamentary elections before 1832 were tolerated. On the theory of representation, no more grotesque system has ever existed. The majority of the members were returned by the boroughs, which might be mere hamlets or deserted villages. Of 513 members representing England and Wales, 415 sat for cities and boroughs; the twelve Welsh counties returned 12 members, the forty English counties 82, leaving four for the Universities. The "nomination" and "rotten" boroughs—the distinction was not always easy to draw—were a large proportion of the whole number. Grandees like the Duke of Newcastle controlled a large number of seats, and when, as happened to this Duke at Newark in 1829, the patron's nominee was rejected, he could expel all who had voted

against him from their tenancies. "Have I not the right to do what I like with my own?" he said in answer to expostulations. When a nomination borough passed from the hands of a patron, it was sometimes advertised by the purchaser as for sale and knocked down to the highest bidder. The electors reaped a fine harvest at elections; a vote at Grampound was estimated by the voters themselves at £300 in each election. Enormous sums were spent by the great families on county elections; in Cumberland, "to save expense," Lord Lonsdale and the Duke of Portland agreed to split the representation. In Yorkshire, fabulous amounts were squandered again and again by the Fitzwilliams and Harewoods. In 1793 Grey said in the House of Commons that 354 members for England and Scotland were returned by the Treasury and 197 patrons. Less than one-third of the House was chosen by genuinely independent constituencies. Cornwall, a thinly populated county, had one member less than the whole of Scotland. Old Sarum was a mound; Dunwich was under the sea. Boroughs were divided into scot and lot and potwalloper boroughs, burgage boroughs, corporation boroughs, and freemen boroughs. In the first class, the payment of local dues conferred the franchise. A potwalloper was one who had a pot of his own to boil. In burgage boroughs electors had to show title to a house or piece of land by "burgage tenure." The chimneys of burgage hovels were preserved to prove them habitable; but sometimes a residence of one night was enough. At Droitwich the qualification was the ownership of "a small quantity of salt water arising out of a pit," which pit was dried up. The gross over-representation of Cornwall was due mainly to Queen Elizabeth, who had great influence in the Duchy and wished to nominate as many members as possible. The Cornish members, how-

ever, were by no means amenable to pressure. Both in Cornwall and elsewhere members were multiplied by creating twin-boroughs, like West and East Looe, or Aldborough and Boroughbridge in Yorkshire, which were in the same parish, and returned between them four members, while Birmingham had none.

The first Reform Bill is thus an epoch-making event in our history; it brought to an end the rule of the great families, the period when a judge could speak of "the rabble who have nothing but personal property." Although the labouring class was not at first enfranchised, the discontent and threatening attitude of the poor had much to do with breaking down the resistance of the nobility and landed gentry. It is often forgotten how seriously disturbed the country was in the years after the peace. In 1815 barracks, scattered all over the country, had been built for 17,000 cavalry and 138,000 infantry. In 1803 the Mayor of Leicester wrote to the Home Office that in the event of an invasion "I think a fourth part of the population would join the French standard if they had an opportunity." The northern and midland counties were considered a specially dangerous area, and the officers reported that serious attempts were being made to corrupt the loyalty of the soldiers. Indeed, the Government could not trust either the regular troops or the militia; in 1817 Lord Anglesey complained to the Home Office that the militia were useless—"and indeed," he adds, "it is very revolting to the feelings of any man to be called upon to attack his neighbours, and possibly his kinsfolk." The volunteers were equally untrustworthy, and the only force on which the Government could rely to keep order was the yeomanry (*Hammond*). The general fear of a popular rising sometimes showed itself in acts of panicky severity, as at the much advertised "massacre" at Peterloo, when eleven persons lost their lives.

The period between the first Reform Bill (1832) and Disraeli's Reform Bill of 1867 is said by Lecky to have been the time when England was better governed than ever before or since. This is a view natural to a parliamentarian, for it was a great period for the House of Commons. An awe and mystery surrounded politics and politicians in those days; the airs of the Member were more than pontifical. It was a transitional time, for though the aristocracy had been stripped of much of its power, time was needed for the middle class to step into the place of the landowners. The first Reform Bill, in fact, did not put the middle class in power. It enfranchised a section of them, and all the landowners, many of whom had had no votes before. The result was that for a whole generation and more, the middle class was Whig or Liberal. Cobden quite erroneously believed that they would remain so permanently. For the time, however, they made common cause with the unenfranchised working man, and were able to impress a curiously bourgeois character upon working-class agitation, until, as was inevitable, the two sections discovered the fundamental antagonism of their interests. During this period, but much more after 1867, the Nonconformist sects had a political importance which has now almost disappeared. The Wesleyans had been strong patriotic supporters of law and order in the first quarter of the century, a fact which was of great advantage to the Government while revolutionary ideas were seething; but the Independents and Baptists had revolt in their blood, and the disabilities under which all dissenters still lay provoked great bitterness. Thus the causes which were then considered Radical were issues which interested the middle class rather than the working man.

Another fact distinguishes the division of classes

in England during the nineteenth century from that which existed abroad. The sharpest line of social cleavage in England was not that which divided the nobility from the gentry, or from the middle class; it was a line drawn through the middle class itself. In no other country did the parochial clergyman, the barrister, and the physician belong socially to the upper class, while the smaller professional people and the tradesmen were on the other side of a barrier. There was a limited number of professions which a "gentleman" might enter without losing caste. He might be an officer in the army or navy, a clergyman, a barrister, a physician, a land agent or a civil servant. Even the calling of a surgeon or solicitor was considered slightly derogatory to a member of the upper class, and any connection with retail trade was out of the question—much more so than in the sixteenth century. The military caste looked down on banking and the stock exchange. These barriers have been gradually broken down within the memory of men who are not yet old. The aristocrats, always more realistic than the upper middle class, were the first to swallow their family pride. To-day the inheritor of the oldest title will gladly ally himself with the daughter of a trans-atlantic speculator, in order to be able to live in his country house for one more generation. But the fetish of being a "gentleman," in the sense which the word bears in Miss Mulock's *John Halifax*, was honoured with a very genuine cult during the whole of the last century. In Germany and Austria, at any rate before the Great War, this kind of exclusiveness was still rigorously maintained. The fortunes of political reform may have had something to do with a chapter of social history which has no exact parallel in any other country. In our day, the supposed connection of refined manners with heraldry and property in land has become too manifestly absurd

to be taken seriously, though there is still a romantic and not ignoble respect paid to the possessor of an ancient and honourable name.

Between 1840 and 1850 there was a trial of strength between the landlords and the "Ten Pound Householders" over the Corn Laws. This was a direct conflict of interests, in which the agriculturists fought a losing battle. The opponents of the Corn Laws had behind them the mass of the unenfranchised, whom the House of Commons had learned to fear.

The victory of the middle class was followed by very active and on the whole useful legislation, especially in the sphere of local government; but these changes were confined to the towns; County Councils enfranchising the countrymen were not set up till 1888. The ruinous Speenhamland system of doles out of the rates was quickly terminated by the Whigs in 1834, not without inflicting real hardship on many agricultural families.

These were also the days of Owenite Socialism and Chartism. The condition of the poor was bad, and very bitter feelings were engendered. But the Chartists, by refusing the co-operation of the Liberal middle class, and talking freely of resorting to physical violence, set all the forces of law and order against them, and suffered a complete defeat. It is interesting to observe that this failure was followed not by increased revolutionary activity, but by a long period of quiescence. There was no class war in England in the middle period of Queen Victoria's reign. The condition of the working man improved, and the country entered upon a short spell of happiness and tranquillity. It was a period of Whig ascendancy, for the Conservative party was broken up over the Corn Laws, and did not recover for twenty years.

During the time when the country was making

the most rapid material progress, the voices of the prophets were stridently denunciatory. While Lord Macaulay was complacently bidding foreign nations contemplate British industry, loyalty, good sense and well-earned prosperity, in contrast with their own revolutions, plots, unrest and folly, there was also a literature of fierce antagonism. Carlyle, Ruskin, William Morris and others hated industrial civilization, not only because it might be argued that the poor were unhappy under it, but because it outraged their romantic and æsthetic sentiments. It is curious that the ardent revolutionists of the Napoleonic age—apart from Byron and Shelley, who died very young—had rallied to the existing social order and tried to moralize it. As the German, Max Beer, says in his *History of British Socialism*, "Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey became in the course of time the spiritual leaders of the new Conservatism, imbuing it with a sense of social righteousness and love of the people. They are the fathers of Tory democracy and Christian social reform." But the shrill vituperators of the mid-Victorian period had little that was constructive to offer; they inaugurated the bad habit of calling our civilization intolerable, and thus spreading discontent without suggesting any remedies that were even remotely possible. Carlyle gradually changed his tone, and became almost Conservative; Morris did not change, and Ruskin remained a Tory Socialist. This hatred of industrialism and middle class government is a social symptom not without importance. France in 1848 expelled Louis Philippe, and by doing so brought to an end a régime of peace, order, quiet, and opportunities for all capable and industrious young men to improve their position. The revolution was made by the clericals, who had been excluded from power, by the working men, who had not been enfranchised, and by a group of

young intellectuals. Heine knew what was coming, for he had found in the workshops cheap reprints of "all writings which smell of blood," and had heard the workmen singing "songs which seemed to have been composed in hell." But Lamartine gave the true reason why France acquiesced in the fall of the best government which the country had ever enjoyed. "France is bored," he said. Louis Blanc and Louis Napoleon were in their different ways more exciting. There are more things in popular psychology than are dreamed of by sound economists and impeccable officials. Farmyard socialism, if it is ever tried, will fare no better than the farmyard capitalism of Louis Philippe.

Lecky's statement, already quoted, that England was best governed between 1832 and 1867, was probably intended as an argument that an intermediate form of government, neither oligarchic nor democratic, is the most likely to promote the happiness of the people. This may be true ; but it would be a mistake to suppose either that the public service was efficient at that time, or that our foreign policy was wisely directed. Our support of Italian liberty was, as Mr. Trevelyan has shown, not only generous in its aim but judicious in its application. But this cannot be said of the opium war with China, or of the Crimean War, a wholly unnecessary enterprise undertaken after we had rejected a statesmanlike solution of the Eastern question suggested by Nicholas I. We backed the wrong horse in the American Civil War, and were within an ace of sending 20,000 men, armed with muzzle-loaders, to drive the combined Prussian and Austrian armies out of Denmark. We were divided between fear of France and Russia, though Russia was a giant with feet of clay, and Napoleon III never wavered in his determination not to quarrel with England. The foreign policy of that time was partly that of Palmer-

ston, and partly of Queen Victoria herself, who constantly intervened, and except in the threatened quarrel with the Federals of the United States and in the question of going to war about Denmark, was seldom in the right, her naturally good judgment being warped by family and dynastic prejudices. She almost drove Disraeli, who may or may not have been unwilling to be driven, into a senseless war with Russia in 1878.

The Reform Bill of 1867, by which Disraeli hoped to "dish the Whigs," dropped its safeguards and reservations while the discussions in Parliament proceeded, and as it was carried, was a longer step towards pure Democracy than the country at large expected or desired. But the monster demonstrations of 1866, thoroughly orderly and constitutional as they were, had produced a great effect on the mind of the Government and the people generally; and Disraeli was free from the illusion that the lower classes would never put the Conservatives in power.

The latest stages of democratization may be summarily dealt with. An Act of 1884 extended to the counties the franchise which Disraeli's Reform Bill had given to the boroughs. It also reduced the property qualification and created the so-called "service franchise." The most important effect of this law was the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourer. The House of Lords demanded that this Act should be accompanied by a redistribution of seats, which was carried out in 1885. Lastly, in 1918, further sweeping changes were made by the Representation of the People Act, which introduced practically universal male adult suffrage, and conferred votes on women who have reached the age of thirty. Other less drastic but still important changes were made at the same time. It is too early to judge of the effects of this great leap in the dark. It has become more difficult than before to guess

what the electorate are thinking, if their mental processes deserve the name of thought ; and it can no longer be even pretended that education or intelligence can exercise any appreciable influence on the choice of representatives. The grant of universal suffrage is a hypocritical oblation to a fetish in whom nobody any longer believes.

This is perhaps the most appropriate place to discuss the principles and present position of the great parties in English politics. But a short preamble may be permitted on the changes which have come over the most ancient of our institutions—the monarchy.

It is a commonplace of English history that the accession of a foreign king, George I, gave a great opportunity for parliament and the large landowners to consolidate their power. At the time when absolutism was in the ascendant in France, England was ruled by two sovereigns who were far more German than English, and who had neither the power nor the will to be autocrats in England. George III, who, while he kept his reason, was a much abler man than is usually supposed, made a determined attempt to increase the power of the Crown by securing the support of influential parliamentarians ; his methods of buying support were rather beneath even the low standard of the time. It was perhaps no fault of his that his numerous sons were men whom nobody could respect. We can only wonder that the monarchy survived George IV and his brothers. Nevertheless, the early Radicals made their worst mistake in attacking the Crown. They fancied that the monarchical principle was both absurd in itself and unpopular. It was neither, as time was soon to show. When Dilke in the 'sixties renewed the criticisms on the sovereign which had long been allowed to sleep, the people of England were almost as angry as Victoria herself. Neverthe-

less, while the prestige and popularity of the monarchy increased, its power steadily declined. The public has been admitted for the first time, by the publication of two new volumes of Queen Victoria's letters, into the secret of the relations between the sovereign and her Prime Ministers. Whether the whole has been told we cannot know; but enough indiscretions have been committed to deface very seriously the popular legend of the Old Queen, and even to impair the confidence which is still placed in constitutional monarchy. It appears that Queen Victoria was constantly bullying and harassing her Ministers, intervening even in minor Church appointments, and unsleepingly jealous of the slightest infringement of her traditional rights. We must, however, remember that the letters of the last period of her reign remain to be published, and we may expect to find that in her old age the Queen, with her ingrained good sense, adapted herself more successfully to the changing conditions of the time. Disraeli, whose sugared compliments were more to her taste than the bluff candour of the aristocrats who preceded him, undoubtedly helped to put her in a false position, and made her, as Gladstone complained, "unmanageable."

King Edward VII, though those who were brought into close contact with him think that he had not more than fair average ability, was, as a strictly constitutional sovereign, able to do his country great service as a diplomatist. It was a new part for a king of England to play, and he seems to have played it to perfection. The German legend that the foreign policy of the country during his reign was his own is, of course, without foundation. Of our present beloved sovereign it is enough to say that throughout his sadly troubled reign he has so borne himself that in England, alone among nations which still preserve the old form of constitution,

there is no anti-monarchical party worth mentioning. Whether this venerable institution will outlive the present century, none can tell. As a recent writer says: "The fortunes of the Crown are bound up with those of the Empire; it is probably as safe as the Empire—and no safer."

Hereditary monarchy is in some ways like the Athenian method of appointing magistrates by lot. The chances are enormously against the sovereign being a man of outstanding ability; but he can get the best advisers, and the law of primogeniture secures continuity and stability; it avoids the serious disturbances of a disputed succession. A king has been trained from boyhood for his peculiar duties, and he is probably much safer as a ruler than an adventurer of genius, since the qualities which enable a man to seize power are not always those which cause him to use it for the benefit of his subjects. Personal loyalty is still a potent motive, and not least among the masses, who revel in anecdotes about the domestic life of the royal family, and like to see snapshots of the King mixing with his people. The mystery in which the hieratic person of a Byzantine emperor was shrouded has been completely abolished. It is probable that one more concession to modernity should and will be made. The King should be allowed to choose a wife from among his subjects. He might be urged, in the public interest, to ally himself with a family well endowed by nature, and not to imitate Cophetua by crowning a beggar-maid; but for every reason he ought not to be confined to the very few families who now constitute the royal caste in Europe.

The Conservative party was not so called till 1835, and the party itself is not much older. Conservatism as we know it was born in the panic about the French Revolution. According to Lord Hugh Cecil, Conservatism consists of three ingredients—natural

conservatism, the distrust of the unknown and the love of the familiar; Toryism, or the defence of Church and King, the reverence for religion and authority; and Imperialism, a feeling for the greatness of the country and for that unity which makes its greatness. "From these three elements the policy of Conservatism is compounded." This description may apply accurately enough to the position of the Conservative party in England under the late Lord Salisbury. But there have been times when the Tories stood for peace, the Whigs for war. Nor does the connection of the party with the Church seem to be much more than an accident. Christianity is anti-revolutionary, but Catholic tradition, which recognizes no right in either King or Parliament to override the law of nature, sanctions the deposition of a tyrant. Nor would an intelligent Conservative wish to be accused of opposition to change as such. Like other parties, the Conservatives have passed through as many changes as a chameleon, and it may be difficult to say for what principles, if any, they stand at present. But there is no question that Conservatism is essentially the party of Order, as Liberalism is the party of Freedom. No sane person supposes that we can be content with one of these without the other; and accordingly, as long as the two parties in the State were Whigs and Tories, or Liberals and Conservatives, there was much in common between them. They often differed as to the best way of serving the State, but both were patriotic, and neither wished to destroy the other. The Conservative is impelled by his love of Order to prefer a strong government, and usually advocates stern measures of repression when the authority of the State is attacked. He desires to see administration strict, efficient, and scientific; he hates all sectionalism, and distrusts the cosmopolitanism which often, he thinks, veils either selfishness or

some international conspiracy, Red or Black. He dislikes sentimentalism, and would rather be governed by a strong monarchy or bureaucracy than by a democracy. That all this is the essence of Conservatism was seen clearly by Herbert Spencer; and when the Radicals, to whom he had given his allegiance, began to dally with State Socialism, he raised a cry of alarm, that this was a "new Toryism." There is in fact a bond of sympathy between Conservatism and State Socialism, which in the future may bring them together, since they are at one in rejecting with dread and horror the disintegrating projects of revolutionary Syndicalism. It is true that Conservatives will always be found trying to make the old order work rather than destroying it. This is not so much dislike of change as a keen sense of continuity and of the value of tradition. The Conservative knows that two things remain unaltered—human nature, and inhuman nature, the laws of the world in which we live. Dr. Ernest Barker's opinion, that "Conservatism, with its appeal to sentiment, is the residuary legatee of all anti-intellectual movements," is perhaps as near an absolute antithesis to the mentality of modern Conservatism as any statement could be.

As Conservatism in the nineteenth century grew out of Toryism, so Liberalism is the heir of the Whigs. Professor Hobhouse says: "The modern State starts from the basis of an authoritarian order, and the protest against that order, a protest religious, political, economic, social, and ethical, is the historic beginning of Liberalism." This is historically the genesis of Liberalism. It was "a crusade against authority based on anything but consent." (*Hammond.*) This was a reversal of the whole principle of medieval civilization, which was built upon the idea that each man has his fixed and ordered place in a hierarchy, with duties attached

to that station. As the parson in Chaucer put it, "God has ordained that some folk should be more high in estate and degree, and some folk more low, and that every one should be served in his estate and his degree." Liberalism attacked these hierarchies, when they were ceasing to function satisfactorily. The Liberal set himself to remove obstacles which hampered the free growth of society. Personal liberty includes the right to hold and express any opinions on religion, politics or other subjects, without punishment or intimidation. Economic liberty rejects Protection as an obstruction, and so Liberalism won a somewhat precarious victory for Free Trade. It also advocated complete freedom of association, without adequately considering that such associations may act in a manner very unfavourable to liberty. It interested itself in movements for the liberation of oppressed nationalities, and for securing better treatment for "inferior races." It strongly supported conciliation instead of force as a solvent of all disputes. It took a wide view of the natural rights of the individual, and wished to minimize State interference with the life and labour of the people. Any unnecessary interference by the State is oppression. There was thus always an idealistic side to Liberalism, a genuine faith in right and justice, and a strong repugnance against Machiavellianism in politics. The opposition to imperialism in the best Liberals was not the effect of any anti-patriotic bias, but of a conviction that to paint the map of the world pink was not a worthy ambition for a great Christian nation. If there has been a reaction against these ideas in our own time, it is, as Hobhouse says, "the cynicism of terror rather than the cynicism of ambition."

A serious problem arose for Liberalism when the doctrine of *laissez faire* was abandoned, and advanced reformers began to lean more and more towards

Socialism. Modern Liberals have tried to prove that socialistic legislation is only the logical development of Liberal theory. They have justified compulsion in industrial affairs—compulsion, that is to say, when applied to the employers of labour, on the ground that *laissez faire* has proved to be inimical to real liberty. "The function of State coercion is to override industrial coercion." Herbert Spencer would have called this a Tory argument, and so it really is. The theory of a "General Will" does not belong to Liberalism, but to the doctrine of Rousseau, and in practice it means the negation of the rights of minorities. Nothing is more alien to Liberalism than the dogma that the State can do no wrong. Nevertheless, the Liberal is still true to his traditions in his dislike of such State Socialism as is connected with the name of Sidney Webb. The individual, says Professor Hobhouse, does not want to be standardized. He does not conceive himself as essentially an item in a census return. Liberals still pay a lip-service to the ideal of retrenchment, which was an important part of the Liberal programme in the days of Gladstone, but in practice they do nothing to check the growing burden of State-expenditure, which is necessitated by the socialistic measures to which they have given their adhesion. There is now not much to distinguish Liberals from the right wing of the Labour party, and their political action has no reasoned basis, since they have deserted the economic creed which was the basis of middle-class Liberalism.

Mr. Ramsay Muir (*Politics and Progress*) has given the real reason why Liberalism is no longer a power in the State, though his diagnosis, unquestionably correct, makes us wonder why he expects that it will recover its influence in the near future. The ideal State of the Liberal, he says, will have a distinctive national character. Liberalism has always had a profound belief in the national spirit—a nation being

a great body of people who feel that they belong together because they are linked by a multitude of ties, which create a real homogeneity. "It is only the homogeneity which nationhood creates that renders self-government possible among vast masses of men and women." In other words, Liberalism postulates an underlying loyalty and patriotism in all sections of the population. Where this loyalty and patriotism are absent, democratic Liberalism, which is government by public opinion, becomes impotent, and the impotence of government leads to anarchy. I shall show presently that Democracy, and Liberalism with it, is being wrecked on this reef. Where any considerable body of citizens repudiates all allegiance to the State, and follows recklessly either international or purely sectional aims, popular government is virtually at an end, and a more coercive system must be substituted for it. Liberalism will come into its own when the ship of State is once more in smooth waters; but of this there are no signs at present.

Democracy is an experiment in government, like any other form of constitution. The extremely loose use of the word, even in this country, and much more in America, makes it necessary to attempt a definition. Following Professor Hearnshaw's useful classification, we may say that it may mean either a form of government, by direct popular vote, which is obviously possible only in very small communities, or a form of State, in which the majority vote of the whole adult population is the ultimate source of power, or a form of society, in which case the word is quite incorrectly made to connote social equality. The second is the only meaning of the word in modern politics. Complete Democracy was attained in this country in 1918; until a short time before this date Democracy was not held to carry with it the right of women to vote. But from 1867 downwards we

may say that our constitution was democratic, and was progressively becoming more so.

No one could seriously extol a system by which all adult persons who have the physical characteristics of human beings are given an equal share in determining the government of a great country. It is possible to argue only that its practical working is better than, or not demonstrably worse than, any practicable alternatives. The theory of equality, if logically carried out, would level the whole population in such a way that, as Montesquieu said, it would pave the way for despotism. No attempts have yet been made, except during revolutions, to carry equality to this extreme ; but apart from this, the failures of Democracy have been manifest. In the Latin nations the incompetence and corruption of the public men thrown up by universal suffrage are almost taken for granted, and the personnel of our own House of Commons is visibly deteriorating. The new type of Labour member is sometimes a drunken blackguard, who turns the House of Commons into a bear-garden. The new forms of corruption are far more demoralizing and injurious to the country than the individual bribery of the past. The candidate a hundred years ago at least gave away his own money ; the modern method is to put the worldly goods of the minority up for auction. It is difficult also to fix responsibility under a democracy ; the leaders are led, the legislators are delegates, and the electors are ignorant and indolent. The government being weak, inefficient, and, in the sense above used, corrupt, it is very amenable to pressure. *The Times* for 24 May, 1917, contained in parallel columns reports of " sugar-sellers fined," and " strike leaders released." The latter, who were stated to have committed offences for which the maximum penalty was penal servitude for life, got off scot-free because they were members of a powerful

organization which was able to bring immense weight to bear on the government."—(*Hearnshaw.*) The same writer says, and with too much truth, that "ministers have, one after another, vacillated and cringed before illegal strikers, Sinn Fein rebels turbulent ecclesiastics, conscientious objectors, syndicalist shop-stewards, and indeed any group of antagonists capable of offering organized resistance." The most disgraceful case of all was the long series of felonious acts committed by a gang of women, actuated by a mixture of hysteria, hooliganism, and sexual perversity, who professed by their crimes to be demonstrating their fitness for the duties of citizenship. The government quailed before these furies, and allowed them to escape punishment by threatening to commit suicide in prison. Nothing is more obvious, or more natural, than the rapid decay in that prestige of the House of Commons which reached its acme in the time of Disraeli and Gladstone. Under unlimited Democracy, the elected Chamber is regarded with increasing indifference. Universal suffrage, as von Sybel predicted, has sounded the knell of parliamentary government. Mr. McIlwain, in his *The High Court of Parliament*, has said the same. "It may well be doubted whether the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty, in any form that means much, can long survive the triumph of Democracy. When the Referendum really comes, the sovereign Parliament must go."

We observe at the present time a wide-spread revolt against Democracy, proceeding, however, not from the classes which, from the paucity of their numbers, have been virtually disfranchised, and exposed to confiscatory taxation without effective representation, but from sections of the population which consider themselves at chronic war with the established order. To this disastrous growth of sectionalism we must now turn.

In 1874 the Trade Union Congress brought forward thirteen candidates for Parliament, of whom two were elected. In 1880 there were three Labour Members, in 1886 ten, in 1895 twelve. The trade unions continued to work with the Liberals till 1899. In this year an independent group was formed, and in 1900 it was settled that the Labour Party should have its own Whips. But a general election came before the arrangements were complete, and only eleven Labour Members were returned. After 1900 the Socialist wing of the party rapidly gained ground. In 1903 the Labour group decided to act independently of other political parties, and its representatives in Parliament had to pledge themselves to vote according to orders, or resign. In January, 1906, an election took place in which the Unionists lost 215 seats, and 56 Labour candidates were returned. The momentous reversal of the Taff Vale decision soon followed. In 1910 the Labour representation fell to 40, with the addition of the Miners' members, who had now joined them. Two more seats were gained in the next election, soon afterwards. In 1915 Labour was represented in the Cabinet for the first time. In the election after the Armistice the Labour Party put into the field 361 candidates, of whom 57 were elected. The election was an overwhelming victory for the Coalition, but chiefly at the expense of independent Liberalism ; Labour became the strongest party in opposition. More recent events are fresh in the memory of all. The Liberals were in a position to put Labour in office, though not in power, and a few months later a new election went in favour of the Conservatives.

The progressive growth in the strength of the Socialist party (for the Labour party has now definitely gone over to Socialism) is a phenomenon common to most industrial countries, with the notable exception of the United States. But whereas

in Germany parliamentary Socialism has dominated the Trade Unions, in England the opposite tendency is to be observed. There is a growing habit on the part of the Unions to act without paying much attention to their representatives in Parliament, and even to speak with contempt of constitutional action. This is the result of that revolt against Democracy of which I spoke. It will now be necessary to explain more fully what directions this revolt has taken.

It is not necessary to describe all the various societies which exist in England for the furtherance of Socialist ideas. The Social Democratic Federation is not a class organization, and its declarations have usually been temperate. For instance, in August, 1920, it resolved, in opposition to Bolshevist propaganda, "that all attempts by a minority to establish a Socialist dictatorship and despotism can only aid reaction, and declares that complete political, social, and industrial democracy is the only safe and permanent foundation for the coming co-operative commonwealth." In opposition to Syndicalism it declared: "Having secured the opportunities of a fuller life and higher form of education, the ballot box can be made the medium by which democracy can come into its own, and the word "strike" will serve only to remind us of a hideous nightmare of the past."—(*de Montgomery*.) It is to be feared that this society is now almost without influence on the Socialist movement. The Fabian Society was founded in 1884 with the object of reconstituting society "in accordance with the highest moral possibilities," a high-flown programme which seems to assume an unanimity of ethical opinion which has never yet existed. The membership of the Society included some highly distinguished names, and it was for many years the centre of theoretical Socialism. The society aspired to follow the Roman general who in the war against

Hannibal *nobis cunctando restituit rem.* It advocated a scheme of collectivism as opposed to individualism, but condemned anything like Communism. It had a decided leaning towards bureaucratic State Socialism, and made a serious study of political economy. The influence of this body has declined; it never had a strong hold upon the masses or their leaders; and its recent pronouncements are said to show a great falling off in scientific accuracy, as well as a tendency to accept extremist views which are not in accordance with its original programme. Lastly, the Communist Party is numerically insignificant, but is growing rather than declining, in spite of the terrible fiasco of Communism in Russia. Its members are *enragés* who wish to be revenged upon a social order which has found no use for them. Communism is an utterly impracticable ideal. Its only partial success in history has been in the Catholic monasteries and convents, where it rested on the double foundation of a religious discipline and of celibacy.

Those who consider that parliamentary Democracy has failed must provide some substitute for it. It will be found that the various political theories which divide the revolutionists are diametrically opposed to each other, and that if the existing constitution is ever seriously shaken they are bound to come into violent conflict among themselves.

The first and by far the most practicable of these alternatives is bureaucratic State Socialism, such as existed, with many qualifications, in Germany before the war. It was in Germany that the worship of the State as "the divine idea as it exists on earth," "the movement of God in the world," "the divine will as present Spirit" (these extravagant phrases are from Hegel) found the strongest expression. "The duty of the State," says Fichte,

in his famous lectures at Berlin after the humiliating defeats of Prussia by Napoleon, " is to care for the maintenance and increase of the population by encouraging marriage and the nurture of children, by health-institutes and the like ; to take means for developing man's empire over nature by well-planned and continuous improvements in agriculture, industry, and trade, and by maintaining the necessary balance between these branches ; in short, by all those operations which are included in the conception of national economy. In return, it is the right of the State to employ for its purposes the whole surplus of all the powers of its citizens without exception. The free and noble citizen offers his share willingly, as a sacrifice upon the altar of his fatherland ; he who needs to be forced to part with it only shows that he was never worthy of the gift entrusted to him." Here we have a sketch of the scientific state, a new conception in the world, which Germany alone made some attempt to realize. It was, however, developed in a manner which gave the owners of property no ground for complaint. Even those who feared the military power of Germany looked upon the German Empire as the paradise of the capitalist and the chief bulwark against social revolution in Europe. In future, however, a State of this kind could only exist if the government possessed more complete economic control over the life and labour of the people, and this could be gained only by extensive nationalization of the means of production. The advantages of a strong government have become so apparent since recent developments of anti-social combination, that in spite of the unpopularity of this type of State among all classes in England, we cannot be sure that it will not at last be adopted. When we consider the colossal waste caused by strikes and labour unrest, and by the necessity of giving per-

petual sops to Cerberus in the way of doles, pensions, and tribute of every kind, we must admit that a government which could deprive all malcontents of their homes and subsistence by a stroke would make the country " a going concern " in a sense in which it is not so now. The whole power of the State, set free from the necessity of conciliating, bribing, and consulting turbulent and factious elements, could be used to diminish wasteful competition, and to place all industry on a scientific basis. England may not be the first country to adopt this type of State ; but it is quite possible that it may be forced upon us as the most efficient way of co-ordinating and organizing the national resources. The German scientific State was broken by a combination of terrified neighbours ; its power rested not on State-ownership, but on military force. In future, the chief danger to States will come, not from warlike neighbours, but from within.

There are, no doubt, several objections to this type of State. The loss of freedom may be galling to many of the citizens ; bureaucratic regimentation is unfavourable to initiative and independence ; officialism may cease to be intelligent ; and the case of Germany shows that even when the management is on the whole very competent, it is not easy to prevent revolutionary forces from gathering strength. But the scheme is workable, and many would prefer the scientific State, administered by capable public servants, to the chaotic condition in which we are to-day. When men are given the choice between the loss of freedom and anarchy, they will always choose the former, for anarchy is the most complete loss of freedom.

But it must be admitted that at present England is not moving in this direction at all, but in the direction of Syndicalism. Syndicalism is not indigenous to the soil of Great Britain. It was made in

France, and its importance in England lies in its capture of the trade unions through their leaders. Anti-parliamentary methods were advocated by the French Revolutionary Socialists at the International Labour Congress held in London in 1876. About the same time a kind of alliance was made by the Socialist Labour Party in Scotland with the American Syndicalists who call themselves the I.W.W. ("Industrial Workers of the World," or as their critics say, the "I Won't Works") a criminal organization which operates by murder and arson. "The British Syndicalists," says Mr. de Montgomery, "take a very optimistic view of the efficacy of strikes. They believe in the possibility of forcing the employers to submission by the mere refusal to work. They argue that if the workers strike often enough it will be no longer profitable for the employers to carry on their business, and that then the workers will take over the business either by force or by purchase at a very much reduced price. The industrial activity under Syndicalism will be carried out by the trade unions and federations of trade unions. The British Syndicalists utterly reject binding agreements between capital and labour under any form whatever."

The tenets of Syndicalism, and its programme, may be gathered, without fear of misrepresentation, by quotations from its leading advocates, most of which I transcribe from Professor Hearnshaw's two classical books on modern labour movements, *Democracy at the Crossways*, and *Democracy and Labour*. "The Syndicalist has a contempt for the vulgar idea of democracy; the vast unconscious mass is not to be taken into account when the minority wishes to act so as to benefit it."—(*A. D. Lewis.*) "If revolutionary Syndicalism triumph, the parliamentary régime so dear to the intellectuals will be finished with."—(*Sorel.*) "Democracy is

the paradise of which unscrupulous financiers dream." (*Sorel.*) The hopes of the Syndicalists are concentrated partly on systematic sabotage and restriction of output, but mainly on the weapon of the General Strike. But " all strikes are useful ; they encourage insubordination and make revolution more probable. The great weapon of the workers against their masters is disorder." The programme of the South Wales miners—the expropriation of the owners, and the seizure of the pits for the benefit of the men who work them—is set out in the pamphlet called *The Miners' Next Step* (1912), which has been called the Bible of the Syndicalists in South Wales. The utterances of Sorel, the main apostle of the movement, breathe delirious hatred. " To repay with black ingratitude the benevolence of those who would protect the worker, to meet with insults the speeches of those who advocate human fraternity, to reply by blows to those who would propagate social peace, is a very practical method of showing the bourgeois that they must mind their own business." " The question of right or wrong does not concern us."—(*Vincent St. John*, the leading American Syndicalist.) Our own Syndicalists and Guild Socialists (the difference between them is very small) are not much behind their continental friends in bitterness and extravagance, as will be seen by four quotations from G. D. H. Cole, who holds an official position at Oxford University as lecturer in Economics. " The blackleg should have no more protection than the law is absolutely forced to give him, for though it is not, as a rule, wise to offer violence to blacklegs, there is nothing wrong about it except in the eyes of the law and the middle classes." " The miner's object is to paralyse the mine when and as he pleases." " In this country at least it is useless to invoke public opinion, because it is selfish, unenlightened, and vindictive ; the

great British Public is marked by narrowness, egotism, and intellectual indolence." "To do good work for a capitalist employer is merely to help a thief to steal more successfully."

This is the devilish doctrine of the class war, the most deadly poison ever instilled into the veins of civilization. It is strange that the human race, which owes to One born in Palestine the highest and purest revelation of the path which leads to health, peace, and blessedness, should be indebted to another Jew for a religion of hatred, cruelty, and misery. Karl Marx started as a violent revolutionist. "He was a man embittered by persecution, enraged by antagonism, soured by adversity, exasperated by suffering. His inspiring and dominant passion was the passion of hate. It was hate that goaded him to his enormous literary labours; it was hate that determined his selection and rejection of historical facts for his distorted description of industrial England; it was hate that fixed his economic principles, that twisted all his arguments, that vitiated all his conclusions. *Das Kapital* is a work of dogmatic mythology, the formula of a new religion of repulsion, the Koran of the class war."—(*Hearnshaw.*) "In hardly any part of his doctrines was he original," says Dr. Hammacher, a sympathetic critic; "he borrowed especially from Sismondi." His own contribution was the vitriolic hatred which appealed to the discontented and disinherited everywhere. After the failure of 1848 he was driven from Germany, and devoted himself to studying the utopian theorists of the past, the result being the book above mentioned, which H. G. Wells justly describes as "a monument of pretentious pedantry." He and his friend Engels drew their deductions primarily from the reports of English commissions into the conditions of the factory system. *Das Kapital* is mainly based on a misreading of circum-

stances peculiar to England. The centre of the system was the prediction that under capitalism wealth was certain to be concentrated in fewer and fewer hands, wiping out the middle class and reducing the working class to the depths of poverty. In two generations at most, the beggars were to dispossess the millionaires, which would be very easy, since the rich would be a mere handful. No forecast was ever more utterly belied by the event. "The whole structure," says Sombach, himself a socialist, "has collapsed as silently as the Campanile at Venice." But the catchwords of Marx are still repeated, and apparently believed. Marx is the saviour-god or inspired prophet of Bolshevism. His gospel of hate has deluged Russia with blood.

The actual progress of social change has been so admirably summarized by Mr. A. Shadwell in his new book, *The Socialist Movement*, that I will take leave to quote a few sentences. "In all the things that matter there has been an increasing approximation, not separation, of class conditions. There has been a levelling up at one end and a levelling down at the other. It stares one in the face in visible matters of the first importance—houses, clothes, and locomotion. . . . No one to-day dreams of building a Blenheim, a Chatsworth, or Castle Howard; and no one builds such cottages for labourers as represented the other end of the scale when the palaces were reared. As for clothes, it is no longer possible, as it used to be, to distinguish classes by clothes, masculine or feminine. In the happy days before the arrival of modern capitalism only the rich could travel at all; everyone else was limited to walking. Now all use the same conveyances; the only appreciable difference between first and third class on the railways is the relative amount of space, and if capitalists dash about the road in their own cars the proletariat do the same in charabancs. To-day the

poorest emigrants cross the Atlantic with all the speed and security commanded by the rich, whose margin of superiority, ease and luxury is constantly diminishing. He that has eyes to see, let him see! . . . The course of social development has not only diverged in certain details from the Marxian forecast, as Marxians admit; it has broadly proceeded in the opposite direction."

It was in 1894 that Socialism of the Marxian type captured the British Trade Union Congress, after a sharp conflict with the old Unions, which had been, on the whole, moderate and pacific. I have already described how the Trade Unions were in 1906 placed above the law, in marked contrast with their position in France and Denmark. But the first attempts to use the Syndicalist weapon of the General Strike were made in other countries, in France in 1906, and again in 1909 and 1910, and a very determined conspiracy in Sweden in 1909. This was put down by the "Public Security Brigade," which maintained the essential services till the strikers had to own themselves beaten. In Italy and Spain the Government was unable to quell revolutionary violence, and in both countries dictatorships were established.

During the Great War several treasonable attempts were made, but the Government was able to buy them off. After the Armistice the movement became frankly revolutionary. A President of the Soviet Republic of Great Britain, a certain Mr. John McLaine, was appointed, apparently by Lenin and Trotsky, and several men who were prominent in organizing the General Strike of 1926 avowed their enthusiastic sympathy with Russian aims and methods. The British Socialist Party "conceived it to be a high honour to be called Bolsheviks." Lenin poured money into the country, and expressed great hopes from the Triple Alliance of miners, railway and transport men. This outburst of revolutionary

agitation perhaps prevented the Government, which was seriously alarmed, from joining France in liberating Russia from the terrorists, and certainly hampered them in dealing with the rebellion in Ireland. There was a railway strike in September and October, 1919, which failed. Then followed the disastrous coal war, which is still (July, 1926) raging. "These men," said Mr. Hartshorn, a moderate leader of the miners, "are deliberately developing in the coalfield a policy which aims at cutting down output, of organizing strike after strike in order to bring about the ruin of the industry, and they are denouncing everybody who is not prepared to lend himself to the promotion of this insane policy." So, a future historian may say, English industry committed suicide. *Suis et ipsa Roma viribus ruit.*

The failure of the General Strike of 1926, through the splendid public spirit of the nation at large, was a severe blow to the Syndicalists. Their favourite weapon was knocked out of their hands with such apparent ease that it may not be resorted to again. The intention of the strike was to paralyse every form of human activity; to deprive the population of light, warmth, and transport; to prevent news being circulated through the press, and to make the entire fabric of society collapse in a chaos of ruin and starvation. On the ruins some form of Syndicalist or Communist tyranny was to be erected.

The following letter from the Communist Party appeared in *The Times* for 4 Sept., 1924. "We have noticed in the Press various statements about the Red attack upon the Trades Union Congress. I am directed by the Industrial Section of the Communist Party to make it quite clear. We are working to transform the trades unions from purely pacific organizations into mass organizations for revolutionary activity. This can be done by steady and persistent propaganda, inside the unions them-

selves, and results justify our claim. At the present Minority Movement Congress there were 270 delegates representing 200,000 revolutionary trades unionists, and further, we have secured a notable victory in the election of Comrade Cook as secretary of the Miners' Federation. We will receive opposition from the present reactionary leaders of labour, but with the inculcation [*sic*] of the unions with Communist propaganda and the establishment of revolutionary nuclei we will gradually be able to weed out those leaders who are enemies of the proletariat, and then we will be in a position to throw out a final challenge to the forces of capitalism, and the class war, instead of being a slogan, will be a fact."

The diabolical plot failed; but it would be a mistake to suppose that so malignant a conspiracy will accept defeat. Another weapon unfortunately remains to them—sabotage and ca'canny. It is the unanimous opinion of foreign observers that this ruinous device has been carried further in England than in any other country. To the objection that it will reduce the nation to bankruptcy the answer is that such is the intention of its promoters.

There is no disguising the fact that the country is in a state of chronic civil war, and that the forces of law and order are on the defensive against anti-social organizations which have no aim except to wreck the State and destroy our existing civilization. England is a house divided against itself; as Mr. Lowes Dickinson says, "The nation is dividing into two antagonistic sections." This sectionalism is a new thing in our history. There was no fundamental hostility between Whigs and Tories. The member for Old Sarum felt himself to be a member for the British Empire. The embitterment of politics began in the eighties of the last century; it has now issued in open war, in which the hands of the Government are tied to their side. "Labour" has become a

political body consciously antagonistic to the rest of the community and in part definitely anti-social. We have only to think of a strike of the medical profession in the midst of an epidemic, or of the masters at a public school during term-time—a manifestly absurd notion—to realize the gulf which divides the social ethics of the professions from those of the Trade Unions. "Parliament," said Burke, "is a deliberative assembly of one nation with one interest, that of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, he is a member of Parliament." But the Labour Member is avowedly retained to promote the interests of one class only.

We are in presence of a grave disease of the body politic, a disease which may even prove fatal. A writer who has rashly undertaken to portray the condition and prospects of England at the present day must try his hand at a diagnosis, and attempt to trace the causes of the malady, and in order to do this in a scientific spirit he must put away all feelings of disgust at the patient's symptoms. I must confess, however, that the origin of this social disease seems to me not less obscure and mysterious than the predisposing causes of cancer, another malady of highly civilized countries.

What is euphemistically called social unrest is by no means peculiar to this country. The working class in France seems to be quite as fierce against society; but in a less industrialized country its members are fewer and less well organized. Scandinavia, as we have seen, has had its troubles. In Germany the ominous growth of the social-democratic vote was unquestionably one of the reasons why the German Government decided to draw the sword in 1914. We in England have at present experienced nothing so bad as the desertion of several socialistic regiments at Caporetto, which

nearly involved the whole Italian army in destruction. The class war in Spain has been violent and bloody. Our own Dominions have suffered from semi-revolutionary strikes. On the other hand the United States, though there is no country in the world where private fortunes are so large and so entirely without social justification, has so far escaped the worst kind of labour troubles. The anti-patriotic class in America is very small indeed; trade unionism is comparatively weak; and there is no political Labour Party of any importance. This immunity from the worst scourge of Europe, and the willingness of American workmen to earn their wages by efficient labour, excite our envy, but make the problem even more perplexing.

Neither race nor religion seems to have much to do with the spirit of revolt, though the Latin races are more ready to shed blood than the Nordics. Consistent Syndicalism naturally abjures religion altogether; "*ni Dieu ni maître.*" In Russia there has been a vigorous though unsuccessful attempt to root out Christianity altogether by persecution.

It is a disease of industrialism. Wherever machine-production on a large scale is found, the spirit of hatred and rebellion seems to arise spontaneously. Rural communities are free from it.

Unless the comparative immunity of wealthy America be considered a proof to the contrary, discomfort among the workers seems not to be a predisposing cause. It is not so much the lowest class of labour, as the higher grades, which fall an easy prey to revolutionary propaganda. There has never in history been a time when so many comforts were within the reach of the labourer, when the State did so much for him, and when his working-hours were so short. But the more his position improves, the more discontented he becomes.

It is a disease of youth. The late King of Sweden

said epigrammatically that if a man is not a Socialist at twenty he has no heart, but if he remains one after thirty he has no head. It is certain that the most turbulent spirits are chiefly youths under twenty-five, and that all revolutions are the work of the young. Socialism in the educated class—"Parlour Bolshevism"—is a fad among ingenuous youths and maidens who enjoy saying "We think," and "It is coming." We remember the early truculence of the Lake School, and wait for time and experience to calm the fever. But we must not forget the part which the French *idéologues* played in preparing for the Reign of Terror.

The Great War seems to have given all authority a shake, and to have increased the hopes of the enemies of society. Lord Grey warned Count Mensdorff on 7 August, 1914, that "this war is the greatest step towards Socialism that could possibly have been made." In several ways it hastened processes which were going on slowly and gradually. This being so, are we to expect that the social unrest will partially subside if or when Europe recovers its equilibrium? The Russian revolution has caused a profound horror of violent change in the minds of all thinking persons, and in the long run it will probably provoke a Conservative reaction; but so far it has caused morbid excitement among all enemies of the social order. It seems to be a law of psychic as well as of physical epidemics, that they have an infective period, during which they fly from one land to another and spread like wildfire; but that after a time they become far less dangerous, and settle down as endemics, which slowly lose their virulence. Although the study of these "movements" as psychopathic epidemics has not received much attention, I think the evidence favours the view that they follow the same law as infectious and contagious disease.

It may no doubt be said that to attribute violent and anti-social intentions to the average British working man is not only unfair but ridiculous. The British working man is a good-natured, humorous, kindly and sensible fellow; an American observer has recently said that he is "about as poor material for a Red Revolution as can be found anywhere in the world." This is perfectly true, but it is unfortunately irrelevant. The Syndicalist leaders have made the discovery that the opinion of the "vast unconscious mass need not be taken into account." The real working men are neither consulted nor considered. The leaders can count upon their obedience because in the first place they have been thoroughly terrorized, and also because they are strongly imbued with the same esprit de corps that makes soldiers fight bravely in a cause which they do not understand, and against opponents with whom they have no personal quarrel whatever. The history of recent strikes proves that they have not calculated amiss. Those who think that the danger of revolution in England is negligible forget that all revolutions are made by small minorities. Lenin, with his curious frankness, declared that out of every hundred of his supporters there were sixty fools, thirty-nine criminals, and one Communist. Yet with this seemingly puny lever he was able to turn the Russian State upside down. The whole of the Labour Party, held together by iron discipline, is pledged to schemes of wholesale confiscation. "It is not the trade unions which make the programme and direct the policy of the Labour Party," said Mr. Snowden, with great candour. The Labour leaders do not even pretend to be democrats.

But the real problem is raised by the fact that the Gospel of hate is now preached with more zeal and ardour than the Gospel of love. There is a veritable fanaticism behind the class war. No method of

propaganda is neglected—inflammatory harangues in the Parks and at the street corners; poisonous pamphlets distributed at the pithead; Communist Sunday Schools in which the "bourgeois" and the Christian religion are held up to execration—all this preparatory work for the revolution is carried on with an energy which has hitherto been associated only with the missions of religious bodies at the time when their enthusiasm is at the height. This is the most perplexing fact in the whole situation. If there is any solution of it, it must be sought by considering the types of men who make up the army of sedition.

The privates in the army of rebellion, apart from the "unconscious mass," the decent working men who are not revolutionists at heart, but fall into line at the word of command, are those who, for one reason or another, have failed to make good in society as at present constituted. The burden of civilization, as I have said, grows heavier in each generation with the increasing complexity of modern life, and the shoulders of those who have to carry it grow no stronger. There is always a large number of degenerates, who might have been eliminated under ruder social conditions, but who are now encouraged to live and multiply. Some of these are imbecile, neurotic, half-insane; others are chronic invalids; others are psychopaths with some morbid strain in their character. Some have failed in life from an accident, or because they have some disability which may not be incompatible with considerable energy and intellectual power. All these cherish a sullen or maniacal hatred against the social order which gives them no scope. A blind lust for destruction takes hold of them. To this class is naturally added the people of the abyss, criminals, hooligans, loafers, wastrels, who are always ready to emerge from their lairs if they think their hour is come. And they always obtain able

leaders, renegades from the ranks of civilization. These leaders are often brilliant men with a fatal moral and mental twist, really insane, but with a frightful method in their madness. Rousseau was a type of what Mr. Lothrop Stoddard calls "the misguided superior," and Lenin was probably a similar example. The tainted genius may exert a dreadful power for evil. Max Nordau has made a detailed study of this type, and has shown how it comes about that, as Anatole France says, those who begin by thinking that they can make all men good, wise, and free, are led to the fatal desire of killing them all. Anatole France has drawn an admirable portrait of the typical *enragé* in *Les Dieux ont Soif*.

The course of revolutions is fairly uniform. First, as in France, comes destructive criticism of the existing order by "*idéalogues*" and "*philosophes*." These attacks have been going on in England for two generations at least. Then follow revolutionary theorizing and agitation, after which an attempt is made to overthrow society. The social order must be morally discredited before a successful attack upon it can be launched. It is also important to create a "defeatist" atmosphere among the defenders of law and order, to hypnotize them by constantly repeating, "It is coming," and if possible to persuade them that resistance is not only futile but immoral. The actual revolution, if it succeeds, may cause incalculable and irreparable damage and misery; but it never lasts long. It is followed inevitably by a reaction, and normally by a militarist government.

This consideration of the laws which usually govern revolutionary movements seems necessary if we are to attempt a prediction of what is likely to happen to Democracy in England. In spite of our absurd methods of electing our representatives,

a member of parliament is still usually a man of respectable character and very fair abilities. There is always a sprinkling of members who deserve a less restricted testimonial. The House of Commons as a whole is a very capable body of men, with wholesomely diversified antecedents and attainments. If they were united, as the members of Parliament in Queen Victoria's reign were united (with the exception of the Irish) in a desire to use their trust, as Burke says, in the interest of "the whole," they would be as efficient a body of legislators as we could reasonably hope to obtain by any other method of choice. But the whole system is threatened with ruin by the increasing prevalence and power of Sectionalism. Any large and organized body, which recognizes no duties to the State as a whole, but only to one class, may make popular government impossible. We have seen already how parliament is paralysed by the anti-social or anti-patriotic action of some violent clique. The members of these cliques in parliament are not free agents; they have pledged their votes beforehand. This reduces debate to a farce; speeches are not made to convince their hearers, but either to be read in the newspapers, or to obstruct the progress of government legislation. Attendance at debates is more and more felt to be waste of time, and the reputation of Parliament in the country declines. This loss of influence and dignity in the elected Chamber is even more marked in other countries. In America we are told that membership of Congress leads nowhere in itself; the "bosses" are far more powerful, and it is even said that the prevailing feeling about Congress is "disgust." In Germany before the war, Parliament was a farce; and even in France the bureaucracy remains solid and unshaken while ministers come and go. A French government is, as a rule, master neither of its legis-

lation nor of its finances. But when parliament ceases to rule, the road is being made ready for the soldier or the terrorist. It is believed that a very significant innovation was made by the first British Labour Government. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald is said to have appointed a committee of twelve as a "liaison body" with Labour leaders outside parliament. This committee is reported to have interfered considerably with the action of the Cabinet. It is plain that this is a step to the dethronement of the Cabinet and House of Commons altogether.

The House of Commons has been saved repeatedly by the traditional sense of its greatness and venerability, which has given the political career a greater prestige in England than in any other country. But this prestige has been much impaired, as we can see by the change in the daily press. The British householder fifty years ago used to read the parliamentary debates through with reverent care every morning ; they were presented as the most important part of the paper. Now the Press is a variety entertainment, and politics are at best one turn among many others. The debates are not fully reported, and nobody would read them if they were. We are losing faith in government by debate, especially now that the debates are unreal. And the payment of members does not seem to have made politicians more independent, but rather less so.

Nevertheless, we shall probably retain our present form of government, buttressed as it is by its long tradition of dignity, if only because there is no obvious alternative. A Syndicalist revolution would, of course, bring it to an end, and after causing appalling misery, including the death of millions by hunger, would be supplanted by a Fascist government on the Italian model. Many Conservatives are already wistfully hoping that England may "find a Mussolini" ; but a counter-revolution on

this pattern would be possible only after experiences which all patriots must hope and pray that we shall escape. It does not seem to me likely that a Syndicalist rebellion will mature. The chief weapon on which the revolutionists rely, the General Strike, has been tried, and has broken in their hands. The other Syndicalist policy of deliberately ruining the key industries would shatter the prosperity of the country, but would not upset the Constitution.

The only other type of government which seems to me possible has been already sketched in this chapter—bureaucratic State Socialism. At present there is no movement in this direction ; but it might not improbably follow another European War. If the country were involved in another struggle for existence, like the Great War of 1914-18, there would certainly be not only compulsory military service, but a mobilization of all the available resources of the country—what is sometimes called a conscription of wealth. In other words, for the duration of the war, a bureaucratic State Socialism would be hastily installed and organized. The condition of the country at the end of the war, whether we were successful or not, would be such that an arbitrary government of a military type would be a necessity. It would be found that in no other way could the machine be kept going, and revolutionary disturbance suppressed. In this way a system of State Socialism might be established, and, once established, it might have a long life. The objectors to this form of government are fortified by the experience of waste and inefficiency which seem to many to be inseparable from State management. To substitute collectivism for private direction is, we are told, to substitute a system of proved inefficiency for one which has on the whole worked well. Mr. Shadwell has lately examined the chief Socialistic experiments which have been tried in

Europe, and still more in Australia, and has come to the conclusion that as a practical policy Socialism has broken down and is discredited. The example of Queensland, where almost every State-controlled industry is conducted at a ruinous loss, is very instructive, and so are the numerous cases in Germany, France, Sweden, Italy and elsewhere, where the State has begun to lease municipal undertakings to private companies. But it may be argued on the other side that Socialism, as we know it, is merely a polite name for the plunder of minorities. We have not yet had much experience of skilled management with the whole power and credit of the State behind it, and unhampered by the necessity of paying constant blackmail to Labour agitation. Some examples which seem to be relevant, for example, the administration of the State railways in Germany before the war, do not support the notion that State management must necessarily be inefficient. The objections to State Socialism are mainly of a different kind, and they have been mentioned above. The type of government which, in my opinion, might be forced upon us as the result of a great war would not necessarily involve wholesale suppression of private ownership. An intelligent government would know how to provide the necessary stimulus for energy, thrift, and ambition. The essential thing would be that the government should be able to bring crushing pressure against anti-social sectionalism, and to stop all waste in administration. Only a collectivist State or a military despotism would be strong enough to do this, and it is probable that in any case a large standing army would be necessary.

It is permissible to hope that anti-national conspiracies may so far die down that England may continue to enjoy the liberty on which it has so long prided itself. The omens at present are very

unfavourable, but our country has righted itself under earlier crises, and the rather irritating commonplace that " the heart of the people is sound " rests, after all, on a firmer basis than unthinking temperamental optimism. Unless the estimate of the national character given in an earlier chapter is erroneous, or no longer true of the England of to-day, our people have a genuine love of liberty, and a natural capacity for organizing their social life on a basis of personal freedom. The future will show whether this tradition, which has given our civilization its distinctive character, can be preserved. For the time being, the most pressing necessity is for the rank and file of the working class to assert their right of thinking, deciding, and acting for themselves. The regimentation to which they have submitted in order to increase their power of combined action has developed into a veritable tyranny, under which, as many of them complain, they " cannot call their souls their own." It is not surprising that foreign observers, like Santayana, in the passage quoted above in Chapter II, suspect that the working people of the towns no longer have what was called the British character.

It is satisfactory to note that there is already a widespread disillusionment with the present Socialist movement, even among Socialists like Lucien Deslinières, who in 1923 wrote: " Eighty years ago Socialism had penetrated into all quarters capable of thought; it was everywhere loved; everywhere its advent was desired. Why? Because it presented itself to the world under its reconstructive aspect, that is to say, humane, benevolent, paternal, full of promise for justice and happiness. To-day, apart from the advanced guard enrolled under the Marxian standard, it has aroused universal execration. Why? Because Marxism, a purely destructive doctrine, excludes every generous ideal

and turns to ridicule the most natural sentiments of the human heart, because it constantly asserts itself by menace and violence, because the doctrine of the class war engenders hate by the inevitable interpretation it receives from labour ; and because finally it lends to Socialism the appearance of a party of disorder and confusion, totally incapable not only of realizing, but even of conceiving a better society."—(Quoted by *Mr. Shadwell.*)

The community at large must realize that there are many non-economic causes of discontent and rebellion, and that these are easier to remedy than the economic difficulties. Whatever remains from the habits of past generations of arrogance and exclusiveness in social intercourse should be done away with. The notion that one calling is intrinsically more honourable than another (except as involving a higher degree of unremunerated service) should be repudiated. Something should be done to diminish the local isolation in which the upper, middle, and lower classes live, each in its own quarter of the town. Above all, perhaps, no investigation can be too thorough into the reasons which make even a moderate day's work, under modern conditions, disagreeable to the worker. It has often been pointed out, by no one more convincingly than by Mr. Austin Freeman in his *Social Decay and Regeneration* (1921) that the extreme subdivision of labour which is required in this age of machinery has a most prejudicial effect upon the workers who are subjected to it. In a modern boot-factory there is not a single man who could make a pair of boots ; in Henry Ford's great automobile factories each man's work consists in the delivery of a single stroke which he repeats innumerable times in the day. This, says Mr. Freeman, is to turn the handy man of the past into a cog in a great machine ; the work which he now has to do is

not work for a man, and nature rebels by making his soul, if not his body, ache. Whether this evil can be remedied without destroying profits and lowering wages, is a serious problem; it is one of the most pressing of our new problems. The social system at present is not working smoothly, and the peril that besets us in this country is not so much that of a *culbute générale*, as of a loss of liberty.

# CHAPTER VI

## EPILOGUE

I LAY down my pen with the consciousness that I have not painted a bright picture of the near future of my country. It is quite true that, in my opinion, the waters which we have now to navigate are likely to be stormy, and that the anti-social ferments within the nation are unusually malignant. But just as a healthy body generates anti-toxins to combat any virulent infection, so our nation may be vigorous enough to neutralize the poisons which now threaten our civilization with death. Nothing but good can be done by calling attention to perils which really exist, and which may easily escape due attention amid the bottomless insincerity of modern politics and political journalism.

However, the dangers of prediction have been so often illustrated that those who are naturally disposed to optimism may be excused for rejecting the anticipations of coming calamity, which are now widely felt, though not so often expressed. In the Victorian Age we had our prophets of woe, who vociferated warnings about "shooting Niagara" when the country was more prosperous than it had ever been before. Even on the morrow of our victory in 1815, "as soon as Waterloo was fought," says Sir Walter Besant, "the continental professors, historians, and others began with one accord to prophesy the approaching downfall of Great Britain," which they liked to compare with Carthage. They emphasized the condition of Ireland, the decay of trade, our huge debt, our wasteful expenditure, our corrupting poor laws, the ignorance and drunkenness of the masses. Nor was this pessimistic forecast confined to our jealous neighbours. In December, 1816, the Common Council of the City of London addressed the Prince Regent as follows: "Distress and misery are no

longer limited to one portion of the Empire, and under their irresistible pressure the commercial, agricultural, and manufacturing interests are rapidly sinking. We can, Sir, no longer support out of our dilapidated resources the overwhelming load of taxation. Our grievances are the natural result of rash and ruinous wars, unjustly commenced and pertinaciously persisted in, where no rational object was to be attained ; of immense subsidies to foreign Powers to defend their own territories or to commit aggressions on those of our neighbours ; of a delusive paper currency ; of an unconstitutional and unprecedented military force in time of peace ; of the unexampled and increasing magnitude of the Civil List ; of the enormous sums paid for unmerited pensions and sinecures ; and of a long course of the most lavish and improvident expenditure of the public money throughout every branch of the Government." We see here the very natural tendency, against which we have just now to be on our guard, to mistake a temporary dislocation of the economic structure of Europe for the symptoms of a fatal disease. We may learn much by comparing the *sequelæ* of the Napoleonic War with those of the Great War of 1914–18. Even the Duke of Wellington said that it was very unlikely that we should ever be as prosperous again as we were before the War. Napoleon's prophecy that Europe would soon be either republican or Cossack has not yet come to pass. Many other mistaken prophecies might be adduced, which would show incidentally that the thinkers and men of letters have usually seen further than the politicians. Perhaps, however, it is not the business, as it certainly is not the interest, of politicians to be far-seeing.

The question whether England is likely to remain one of the most powerful countries in the world is distinct from the question whether our industrial

system is breaking up from within. Internal decay and disruption would of course make it hopeless for us to try to hold our own with our rivals ; but apart from the subversive movements which we have noted and deplored, it is possible that there may be an alteration in the centre of gravity of civilization which must necessarily before very long depose our country from its present position. I have argued that there are such changes. The future is likely to be with the large countries ; England is as much too small in comparison with the great aggregations of population in Asia and America as Holland was in the Europe of the seventeenth century. We have reached, and even passed, the optimum number of our population ; any further increase would be only a source of weakness, whereas the American countries are still expanding healthily, and eastern Europe is not yet full. We are no longer invulnerable at home, and sea-power will probably be rather less important in the future than in the past. The greater security of America will alone be enough to give her a decisive advantage in our competition with her. It seems then, for every reason, unlikely that our position as a world-power, which was made possible by a combination of circumstances which are no longer operative to the same extent as formerly, and which was taken advantage of and used to the full by the wonderful energy and ability of our countrymen, will endure much longer. The prospect is unwelcome to a patriot. But we may reflect with pleasure on the steady growth of the Dominions into great and powerful nations, speaking our language and cherishing our traditions. Whether these nations will be willing to contribute much to strengthening the position of the mother-country in Europe, is doubtful ; but racially, the prospects of the English stock seem on the whole to be more favourable than those of any other. Our great good fortune in being

the first to occupy the best parts of the newly discovered continents, may, if we are wise and resolute, enable the English-speaking peoples still to hold the first place among the races of the world. Much will depend on the friendliness of the United States, on which we certainly cannot count, but of which we need not despair.

But the future of the English-speaking races depends very largely on a problem which has not yet been decided. Will supremacy ultimately fall to those nations which, like the Anglo-Saxons above all others, have established a high standard of living, with varied and abundant food, comparatively short hours of work, many amusements and comforts of every kind, or to the cheaper races, who are accustomed to a simpler manner of life, and make fewer demands upon their environment? At present, the high-standard races have the upper hand; no doubt we might say that they maintain a high standard because they have the upper hand. Countries like Australia, New Zealand, and the United States are called, and wish to be called, the paradise of the working man. Now it is the almost unanimous opinion in those countries that their high standard of living, their short hours and high wages can be maintained only by the forcible exclusion of Asiatic labour. This rigid exclusion is regarded as a matter of life and death to the white man. In other words, they admit that the Asiatic gives better value for his wages than the European, and that under a system of free competition he would make it impossible for the white man to exist. This is not disputed; force must be used to protect the "higher" civilization from peaceful penetration by the "lower." The question is whether this new Chinese wall will be in the long run more successful than the wall which the Chinese built to keep out the northern nomads. All talk of disarmament seems

to be futile so long as peaceful penetration would mean the submergence of the whites. It is sometimes pointed out that labour troubles are becoming common in India, China, and Japan ; the hope is expressed that these nations will catch the infection of European unrest, and become as unwilling workmen as the whites. These anticipations ignore the fact that the Oriental has no wish for the heavy and expensive food, the awkward and expensive clothes, and the varied luxuries of the West ; he is satisfied with wages on which a European would almost starve. It is possible that he is on an average capable of a little less sustained exertion than an able-bodied Englishman or American ; but the difference is not nearly enough to compensate for the far higher wages which the latter finds essential to his comfort. Nor does this difference in the ratio of work to wages apply only to Asiatic as compared with European labour. In rough or unskilled work, the Irishman is more useful to an employer than an Englishman, and an Italian than an Irishman. In the United States and South Africa, the native-born white man will hardly touch rough manual labour. In South Africa this is done by the Kaffirs, in America by immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. It is thought by many that this self-chosen inferiority of the Anglo-Saxon as a labourer may at last be his ruin. Either it will be impossible to export commodities made in lands where the costs of production are abnormally high, or the more efficient worker will somehow gain an entrance into the workingman's paradise. The Americans are now protecting themselves by legislation ; they are severely limiting the immigration of the cheaper European races. In England, the trade unions are strong enough to prevent the importation of Italians or other foreigners in any large numbers, but in France there is a steady influx of Italian labour into the southern towns. It

is possible that the establishment of a universal eight-hours working day may diminish the competition ; but even so, the English and American labourers are likely to find before long that their wages cannot, for any length of time, exceed the value of their labour in the international market. I have already given reasons for thinking that a hundred years hence England will be once more predominantly agricultural, with a much smaller population than it has at present. The high cost of English labour, as well as the curtailment of our foreign food supplies, may bring about this result. And in no other country is Labour so parasitic on the community as it is fast coming to be in England. Our vast expenditure on doles and pensions of every kind is a handicap which no energy on the part of the industrious portion of the community can ultimately overcome. The demoralization of the recipients—the corruption of the citizenship of the working man, as Sir Henry Jones called it—is extreme ; and a feeling of hopelessness is spreading among the class which desires nothing better than to work for the prosperity of England, but is not content to be treated as the milch-cows of predatory legislation.

Changes in the art of war have often altered the course of civilization and determined the fate of nations. Without going back to the first discovery of bronze, and then of iron, we may note that the ascendancy of cavalry over infantry, from the battle of Adrianople in 378 to the battle of Courtrai in 1302, had a profound influence upon the social equilibrium in Europe ; that the yeoman's long bow upset the supremacy of the mounted knight in armour ; that the impregnability of the medieval castle was terminated by gunpowder ; and that in the recent war it was found to be impossible to defend a fortress except as a knot in a long line of trenches, thus giving the attack a new advantage over the

defence, always an ominous thing for civilized nations. The bombing aeroplane also threatens to make war far more destructive of the treasures of civilization, including the finest works of man in art and architecture, than at any previous period since the coming of civilization. On the other hand, the aeroplane probably gives governments a new and powerful weapon in suppressing popular insurrections. Both aviation and the submarine are inventions which an Englishman interested in national defence has cause to deplore. They greatly diminish our security, and add little to our power of offence.

This raises the question whether we are likely to escape another great war, which would confound all predictions. Wars have hitherto been made by the classes who have much to lose. *Delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.* They were formerly made chiefly from ambition or cupidity, but recently mainly from fear. But it is certain that in the next great war all who have anything to lose will lose it, and the bureaucrats who in 1914 fancied that war would be an antidote to revolution made a tremendous miscalculation. It seems, therefore, unlikely that we shall see any more wars favoured or supported by capitalists ; nor is it easy to see how a great war could be made without the support of capitalists. Russia has not enough faith in her crazy communistic experiment to launch a jehad of anti-social and anti-religious conquest upon Europe, and her resources would hardly suffice for more than a raid. However, it would be rash to count upon the disappearance of the oldest and most costly of human follies ; nor does it seem that our belief in an era of peace finds much credence on the Continent. We all wish well to the League of Nations ; perhaps the majority can echo the pious hope that " something good may come out of it."

Something has already been said of the changes in

the make up of our population, which seem to be wholly for the worse. The successful—those for example who are sufficiently well-known to be included in *Who's Who*—are not nearly keeping up their numbers. Fifty consecutive entries in this biographical work, chosen by opening the book at random, show that fifty successful men and their wives had only eighty-four children, an average of less than two. Such figures seem to indicate that this class, on which the main burden of the taxes is laid, is accepting the risk of complete family extinction, instead of continuing an unequal struggle. When we consider how much of the national achievement has been due to strong leadership by upper and middle class families, we cannot view without regret and alarm a progressive diminution in their numbers. It is worth considering whether the right sort of family pride and ambition could not exist severed from an exacting standard of living, so that we might have a poor aristocracy, whose pride would be to live in hard training, devoting themselves earnestly and efficiently to some branch of useful work. Such a class, paying its way by intelligence and diligence, would be able to survive, and would have no need to carry birth-restriction to such an extreme as at present ; they would in fact be in a stronger position than what Cicero calls the *contionalis hirudo aerarii, misera et ieiuna plebecula*, who are becoming every year a greater burden on a community which may not always be able to support them. There are already many devoted public servants who live in this spirit ; but the upper class as a whole is slow to accept the much simpler manner of living which since the war has been forced upon them, and will be forced upon them still more. To will the extinction of an honourable family is a pusillanimous acknowledgment of final defeat, which there is little to justify, when plain living is still open as an alternative, and

when there are still undeveloped countries under our flag where a capable and industrious man is allowed to reap where he has sown.

The moral condition of a country must obviously be taken into account in any attempt to predict its future, both because the ultimate test of the success of a civilization is the kind of men and women whom it produces, and because on the moral soundness of the population depends its power of weathering a storm. But nothing is more difficult than to make a fair estimate of the character of a nation as a whole. Burke professed that he could not draw up an indictment against a nation ; and it is almost equally rash to compare the manners and morals of a country like England to-day with what they were fifty or a hundred years ago. Something has been said on this subject in a former chapter ; but the writer who ventures on such criticism must not forget how many years he has lived in the world. The elderly man always tends to be a *laudator temporis acti se puero ;* the heavy father has been a standing joke in comedy for two thousand years and more. The younger generation do not admit the alarming symptoms which seem so plain to their elders ; the youth and maiden are well satisfied with themselves and their time. Anyone of them is ready to say, with Ovid :—

*Prisca iuvent alios : ego me nunc denique natum*
*Gratulor ; haec aetas moribus apta meis.*

But a writer on England must be allowed to say what he thinks, even though his hair be turning grey ; he may feel secure of not being listened to by those whom his remarks most concern.

It is twenty years ago since Sir Flinders Petrie, in his *Janus in Modern Life,* called attention, in a very pessimistic vein, to what he called " present changes of character " in England. He begins with the " elaborate system of compulsory sloth," en-

forced by the trade unions. This, I believe, is not true of all trades; if it were, our financial position would be worse than it is; but it is undoubtedly a crying evil in certain cases where there is no direct foreign competition. He then declares that the pleasures of the public are of a deplorably low type. "The newspapers that are read are a revelation of the vacuity of the public mind, as the advertisements are a testimony to its imbecility." It can hardly be denied that the newspapers of fifty years ago appealed to a much higher grade of education than those which now have the largest circulation, or that a high-class journal now finds it very difficult to exist. "The dishing up of legal filth for the lower classes, and the morbid love of trivial accidents and catastrophes, show terribly the mere animalism which fills their horizon." "The one subject on which most print is spent is that which is absolutely futile, sport and games. Whether one group of men, selected by mere accident, is a minute trifle more active than another accidental group, is a matter of such utter insignificance that it would seem impossible to suppose that anyone would turn the head to see the result decided?" Here I must confess that I am far less serious than the learned professor. An athletic contest is at least as interesting as a play, and I can see nothing degrading in being interested, or even excited, by such a spectacle. But the love of reading about vice, crime, and fatal accidents is surely a proof of a morbid state of mind. We may perhaps be thankful that the working man is so absorbed in vicariously breaking the Sixth and Seventh Commandments that he has less attention to give to the agitators who urge him to break the Eighth; but there must be something pathological in the taste which feeds by preference on such garbage. Even more ominous is the universal passion for betting and gambling,

on which we may agree with Sir Flinders Petrie. "It implies a craving for excitement apart from personal exertion, which is always a bane to character; it involves the idea of gain apart from labour of mind or body, which is demoralizing to the sense of work; and it is based on the essentially ungentlemanly principle of benefiting by the loss of another, whereas all honourable gain is by sharing of the benefits of labour."

All these evil things have the appearance of being caused by boredom and nervous depression. Any kind of factitious excitement, the cruder and more irrational the better, is now craved for. No person with any cultivation of mind, or any elevated tastes, could find pleasure in such distractions. We may deplore the dullness in the poor man's surroundings, which drives him to such modes of relief, while yet entertaining a fear that the disease has a deeper root than remediable defects in the environment.

On the other hand, we may recognize with gratitude the disappearance of all cruel sports, and the marked decrease of drunkenness, which can no longer be called a national vice. And it would surely be true to say that the respectable working man's home is a far more civilized habitation, cleaner, more comfortable, and better ordered, than at any earlier time. Whatever faults may be apparent in the tastes of the poorer classes, the improvement in their condition has been enormous, and it would be untrue to say that no moral improvement has gone with it. Self-respect is the ground of half the virtues of an Englishman, and the whole population, except the submerged class, has now learned at least some measure of self-respect.

In all strata of the population there has been a reaction against the middle-class ideals which inspired the once popular books of Samuel Smiles. The man who came up to London with half-a-crown

in his pocket and became a millionaire, is no longer held up to our admiration. The aristocracy and the working men have never loved this type; it is one of several ways in which they are nearer to each other than to the class between them. The result is that "an increasing objection to labour is noticeable right through the British nation," as a shrewd foreign observer said, twenty or thirty years ago; the process has gone much further since. We may approve or we may disapprove; but England as the idle apprentice will neither make money nor keep it; and our tastes are not simple.

Together with this rejection of Puritan standards of work there has been a revolt against Puritan ethics generally. Here again we find the aristocrats and the working men in agreement against the middle class. The sons of the rakes of the Regency were driven into unwilling respectability by their unnatural Victorian alliance with the business community; now this class has broken loose, with the unedifying results which fill our daily papers. Christian ethics have been branded as irrational taboo-morality. Licentiousness is justified in our fiction, and not reprobated in society. The monogamous family is being broken up, and therewith the strongest bulwark of civilization against disintegration and anarchy is being undermined. The pranks of the idle rich are of very little importance; but looseness of conduct is unquestionably spreading downwards into classes where it was almost unknown. The knowledge of methods of birth-control, which society has no right to withhold from any class of the population, has had unfortunate results upon the morals of very many unmarried persons of both sexes.

Nevertheless, I do not think that the national character has really deteriorated, except in its attitude towards industry and hard work. The

exception may have disastrous results for the country; but there is no excuse, in my opinion, for a general denunciation, in the style of Juvenal, of the manners and morals of our time. Our young people are not heroic; but they are amiable and kindly, and their freedom from conventionality has a good side, as we should soon see if we were transported back to the England of eighty years ago. They respond to sudden calls, as in the Great War or the General Strike, in a manner which shows that they are not really degenerate.

Some observers of the materialistic and unheroic character of our civilization have been heard to sigh for "a new religion," which might elevate the minds of men with new hopes and new enthusiasms. A few words have been said on the subject of religion at the end of the chapter on Industrialism. Christianity is the generic name of a number of different religions, some of which have only an adventitious connection with the Gospel of Christ. Genuine religious revivals occur from time to time, and have a startling, but short-lived, popular success. They are difficult to predict, and they seem more congenial to the so-called Celtic temperament, for example in Wales, than to the more stolid character of the English. There are no signs at all that any outburst of religious enthusiasm is likely to occur in England in the twentieth century. Superficially, the organized religious bodies seem to be slowly losing ground. The emancipation of women, and the education which they now receive, have assimilated their mental outlook to that of men, and this has been injurious to the interests of institutional religion, much more in the north of Europe than in the Latin countries, where the position of women has changed less. These tendencies have led many to expect a gradual disappearance of religion from its age-long position as one of the most potent factors

in social life. In much of our most modern literature it is simply left out of account. But a serious thinker, whatever his personal convictions, will be slow to believe in such a rapid and subversive change in human nature. He may even doubt whether the decay of Christianity has not been much more apparent than real. The essence of Christianity is, as Nietzsche said, a " transvaluation of all values," a conviction about the position of man in relation to the unseen Divine Power who made and governs the universe. It is essentially a religious idealism, which traces its origin to a historical revelation. It appeals very strongly to those who are susceptible to such a call, but, as its Founder repeatedly warned his disciples, it is never likely to be acceptable to the majority. The believers were to be the salt of the earth, or like leaven hid in three measures of meal. " The Spirit of Truth " is a Spirit whom " the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not neither knoweth him." The Church, however, was not long content to appeal to the *anima naturaliter Christiana,* or to the penitent sinner who often has the makings of a saint. It issued irreligious appeals, in the form of lurid threats and gorgeous promises, to the irreligious, and by means of unholy alliances with the secular arm became, at least nominally, the creed of everybody. But it is a law that a religion which gains power by non-religious methods invariably uses it for non-religious ends. Church history in the so-called ages of faith presents a most unedifying spectacle. What has happened in our day is that these non-religious appeals have lost their cogency. Partly from discoveries in natural science, but still more from the growth of the scientific attitude in weighing evidence, the materialistic pictures of bliss and torment, which once produced a certain effect, are now either rejected or interpreted in a very symbolical sense. Deprived

of these weapons, the Church has proceeded to secularize itself, and to present the Gospel as a prophecy of "a good time coming" in this world. But this is quite obviously not Christianity, and the laity do not like the priest in politics. So the Churches, against their will, are being thrown back upon their real message and their own business. There is no reason to think that the strictly religious appeal of Christianity is less powerful than it ever was; but, as always, it is an appeal which does not attract the majority. The proper attitude of the Church is frankly to accept this position, which is that of the Founder himself, and to find its usefulness in steadily holding before the nation a heroic and noble ideal of belief and conduct, in contrast with the secularity, greed, and hypocrisy of society in general. So purified from extraneous accretions, Christianity may in the future exercise an incalculably beneficent influence upon the life of the nation, and may win the allegiance of many who at present stand aloof from it.

Nor is the function of the other higher activities of the human spirit much less important at such a time as this. No country has had a more splendid succession of inspiring teachers, whether poets, philosophers, or men of letters. The idealistic tradition in England is much older and more deeply rooted in the national character than our temporary and partly accidental addiction to material success. In proportion as our people can be taught to interest themselves in those treasures of the soul, in which one man's gain is not another man's loss, and which are increased by being shared with others, we may hope that the bitterness and narrowness of economic strife may be assuaged, and that something like a really harmonious civilization may come in sight.

Education is not a remedy for barbarism in the soul, but it is a ladder by which those who will

may rise out of it. The State, however, would be wise to make the domestic arts and crafts the basis of instruction in the primary schools. At present the criticism is partly justified, that our educational system does not train young people to be either handy men and good housewives, or to be literary and artistic persons, but only to be schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, and teachers in art schools. There is also the great danger of working men's colleges being captured by doctrinaire Socialists, who, instead of the humanizing studies of scholarship, imbue the minds of their pupils with the most poisonous kind of class hatred. After a short time, the pupils refuse to listen to anything else.

I have laid bare my hopes and fears for the country that I love. This much I can avow, that never, even when the stormclouds appear blackest, have I been tempted to wish that I was other than an Englishman.

# APPENDIX

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